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BUCKLEY VERSUS YALE

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American MERCURY

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*He was called everything from
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"the most dangerous undergraduate
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William F. Buckley, Jr.

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Introduction by John Chamberlain

BUCKLEY'S career at Yale (class of '50) was brilliant and stormy. The class historian described him: "The most outspoken *News* chairman in 70 years, William F. Buckley, Jr., neatly undercut tolerance, tomfoolery, and everything to the left of Senator Taft. *News* editorials, for once, were regularly read: 'What'd Buckley say this morning?' He was his Class' Bright Young Man, among many bright young men; for better or for worse—and perhaps significantly—we had none to match him." His first book amounts to a declaration of war against the present drift of American education. Using his own alma mater, Yale, as a case in point, he shows how "academic freedom" is being used to undermine traditional American values. Buckley is an eloquent spokesman for the new generation of conservatives—the "new radicals" on the university scene.



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An Open Letter to General Eisenhower



***In the
Mercury's
Opinion***

DEAR GENERAL:

During the past few months, sir, while you've been busy in Europe, I've been traveling around the United States, speaking, digging up material for articles and books, doing three television shows a week, running *THE MERCURY*, and writing a few pieces for *Cosmopolitan*. I get around, General; I've spoken in forty-six states; I can call more people by name in more places in this country than Jim Farley can; I put my feet under a lot of different tables in a year, and listen to the questions and opinions of a lot of different folks. Good folks, too.

Much of my conversation, perforce, has been about you. A young insurance salesman in Maumee, Ohio, stood up in the auditorium and asked: "Mr. Huie, what's the truth about General Eisenhower?" In Dallas, Texas, at the Woman's Club, a peppery little woman inquired: "Is there something in Eisenhower's past that he's afraid

of?" And in a farmhouse near Omaha, a rugged, old character pushed back from the dinner table — his wife had just cooked us a brace of pheasant — and said: "What-the-hell, Bill, has Eisenhower got the stuff to be a *really great man*?"

I'll tell you what's back of all this interest in you, General. The American people are fed up to the gills with *commonness* and *littleness*. They're sick of Truman and Vaughan and Boyle — the little Missouri men. And, on the other side, Stassen has become a tired old youth, Dewey is the detested reminder of lost opportunity, Warren is decent and Taft is honest, but neither of them can ever cause a hat to be sailed into the air.

What this country needs, simply, is a *great man*. Not a Leader in the totalitarian sense: Americans will never crowd under a balcony chanting "Doo-chay! Doo-chay!" But Americans do want a man they can be enthusiastic about. They want a big man; an honest man; a colorful man; an unselfish man who will move into the White House, drive out the chiseling little money-changers, and make most Americans proud of their President again. Americans also want to believe that they have a wise man for President — a man who can direct the safeguarding of the richest nation in all history, and who, within prudent bounds, can extend aid to other

worthy and aspiring peoples.

I think this, General: I think that most Americans regard you as their likeliest candidate for greatness. You are younger than General MacArthur; you don't possess his learning — your record at West Point was a long way back of his; but then you have a humility that MacArthur either lacks or fails to project. And I confess that as one American I am intrigued with your possibilities. It's possible, I believe, for you to be elected President; and it's possible for you to become the greatest President this country has had since Abraham Lincoln. It's even possible for history to know you as the Saviour of Western Civilization or the Great Emancipator of Mankind.

I say these are possibilities. I don't know that you have either the capacity — physical, mental or spiritual — or the desire to try to realize them. But they are possibilities that no man should regard lightly. And as one American with a sense of history, I'd like to see you, sir, try to realize them.

I'll go further: as an American of good will who wishes you well, I'll presume to advise you as to how I think you might begin realizing your possibilities.

First, make a simple announcement like this:

At the close of my military career, I now aspire to become President of

the United States. My aspiration is founded in the belief that, as President, I can accomplish something hopeful for my countrymen and for mankind.

Don't announce that you'll "accept a draft." Americans are weary of hypocrisy, so why start what may be a hopeful political career on a hypocritical note? The Presidency is an honorable aspiration for every American; and if you don't aspire to be President, then there is little likelihood of your ever realizing the aforementioned possibilities.

Don't hesitate because you're a soldier. An American general has as much right to aspire to the Presidency as has a lawyer or a haberdasher. Washington was a general; so was Jackson. There is no indication today that would-be tyrants are any more numerous among soldiers than among carpenters. Hitler was a house painter; Mussolini was a newspaper editor; Stalin was educated for the priesthood. As a matter of record, for the last hundred years, since Napoleon Bonaparte, the world seems to have suffered less from soldiers than from most any other class of people.

The military is no *samurai* class in America; a soldier in this country pulls on his pants the same way every other man does; he pays taxes, and votes, and has the same rights to public office. Those Americans who question the right of a military man to run for the Presi-

dency are trying to make of the military a class apart.

And don't be influenced by all this nonsense about your being "an indispensable man in Europe." Or that, to run for the Presidency, you'd have to "desert your post." Nothing you are doing in Europe can be compared in importance with the Presidency. If you are promoting anything of value in Europe, you can promote it ten times as effectively as President. You don't have to wait until "Truman relieves you" or until you "finish your job" or until you "take off the uniform."

Just announce for the Presidency, resign, and come back home and start campaigning. No beating about the bush; no hypocrisy; just plain honesty.

You'll then have to start talking about what you believe. If you want to be President, why? What courses do you propose for the nation? Do your convictions make you a critic of the present administration or a supporter of it? Are you a Liberal or a conservative?

If you are a supporter of Truman, and you want to run as a Democrat, then you can, no doubt, have the Presidency without much effort. You can make a deal with Truman. You promise to continue Truman's policies, to keep all his cronies on the payroll, to make the Government bigger and costlier every year, and not to upset any of the patronage arrangements, and Truman will step

aside and leave you only one opponent: Senator Taft.

With your running as a Democrat against Taft, it will be no contest. You'll sweep the South, the East, and California; you'll be an even bet to carry Taft's home state; and you'll probably poll 67 per cent of the votes cast.

If you just want to be President, General, then the crafty way is to make a deal with Truman. I'm not at all sure in my own mind that you haven't *already* made such a deal. I'm convinced that Truman has offered it to you. In the May, 1951, *Cosmopolitan* you'll recall that I discussed *Truman's Plan To Make Eisenhower President*. Truman has the plan, all right; the only remaining question is whether you are going to accept it.

IF YOU REALLY want to be a great President, however; if you want to try to fulfill those inspiring possibilities; then, in my view, you'll have to follow the harder course; you'll have to run as a Republican.

What this country needs is a restoration of honesty in government, a restoration of respect for government. Our national government must be restrained and disciplined; our leaders must display evidences of wisdom. If our government cannot be restrained; if each year it gets bigger and costlier, with more taxes and more inflation, then from history we know that tyranny and

slavery are inevitable.

But for you to run sincerely as a Republican, sir, won't be easy. Here are some of the difficult chores you'll have to perform:

Your first opponent will be Senator Taft — and he is a worthy one. Taft is honest and intelligent and forthright. He knows what he believes and he doesn't equivocate. He doesn't have to consult Dr. Gallup before he announces an opinion. Taft deserves well of this republic, and with his characteristic honesty he has performed the democratic service of stating his aspirations and laying his views before the electorate.

To those of us who want the Republican Party to take over the national government in 1952, Taft has a strong appeal. He offers the American people a real *choice*. He'll make changes in Washington. He'll try to restore honesty. He has a profound respect for law, so he'll try to govern by law. He'll fire some people, install new faces, and he'll try, at least, to reduce taxes, to reduce the cost of government, and to restore respect for government. In foreign policy Taft will proceed always on the assumption that America's national interest should be the foremost consideration.

Now, General, how do your views differ from those of Senator Taft? Are you prepared to give vigorous leadership to the protest movement against the present ad-

ministration? Many Americans are convinced that you can't do this; they say that you have so long enjoyed preferment from Democratic administrations that you can't assail your "commander-in-chief."

Is this true? Are you so beholden to Truman and his gang that you can't criticize them? Have you been a party to Truman's errors? Are there any stray deep-freezes or mink coats around your quarters? In short, how can you lead a protest movement if you are not in a position to protest?

Do you think taxes are too high? Are you appalled by waste? Do you deplore the immorality of the Truman Gang? Have you an intellectual case against Dean Acheson and all his friends-of-Communism? Do you understand the implications of basketball fixes, West Point cribbing, job buying, the wholesale bribing of tax collectors — the entire trend toward a collapse of conscience in America?

Is your standard of honesty the same as Truman's?

In the interest of the nation, sir, if you want to run as a Republican, you first should make sure that you feel like a reformer. Then, if you are sincerely opposed to Truman's conduct and lack of principles, then you should assure the American conservatives on all these points. You should be able to match Senator Taft's criticism of what we have had, and you should give us a full measure

of assurance that we will, indeed, have a change.

If you cannot bring yourself to state the case against Truman; if you can't give the American people a clear choice between you and Truman; then, in honesty, you should either stay out of the race or you should accept Truman's deal.

In foreign policy — on the matter of your present activities in Europe — you should be able to be objective with the American people. Have you found any indication that the French will really fight the Russians? Do you think that a great fighting army can be built of Frenchmen and Italians? If you don't think this, will you be forthright enough to tell the American people that their dollars are being wasted in Europe? Or have you yourself acquired such an interest in our European policy that you can't consider it objectively?

If you are sincerely against Truman, sir, and if you can convince the American conservatives that you offer a choice and a change, then I believe you can defeat Senator Taft and win the Republican nomination.

With the Republican nomination, however, you will have only begun to fight. Against the Democratic nominee, probably Truman, you will face one of the dirtiest campaigns in our history. They'll hit you high and low, and only a strong man will be able to take it.

Can you take it, General? There

are reports that you can't. General MacArthur, for one, says that you lack the stomach, both literally and figuratively, for such a fight. The people over the country have heard that you suffer from "nervous stomach," that physically you could never stand a rough campaign. And there is the more ominous report that you lack the will or the constitution — Truman uses a rougher word — for controversy.

Assurances on these points should come shortly after your announcement.

There remains, over the country, the "woman question." I never get out of an auditorium without somebody darkly asking me if "that Wac" isn't what you're afraid of. The rumor seems to be pretty well spread around that something involving a woman went on during the war, and that Truman could crucify you with it.

I assume you've given this matter some thought. No doubt, true or false, the Truman gang will pour this on you, but, if you want my opinion, it will not hurt your campaign nor your possibilities as a

President. Many Americans don't care whether or not you patted a bustle or two while you planned the great invasions; and those who do care are prepared to forgive.

So, General, as Mr. Jim Farley said on my television show recently, it seems to be a personal matter, strictly up to you. If you want a fight — and if you've got the stomach for it — then move in. We need you.

With a fighting Eisenhower as the Republican nominee, we can sweep the South and most of the rest of the nation. We can organize in the South a real Republican Party and end the old one-party system. And I predict that if you really set your mind to it, you can fill this country's need for a truly great and respected President.

But if you're too fouled up with Truman to be an effective opponent; if you can't protest very effectively because you secretly favor what you are protesting against; and if you have no stomach for battle — then, in fairness to the protest movement, you should stand aside and let us try to win with Taft.



THE

PRIVATE LIFE

OF A PRESS AGENT

*The weary, garish world of
a Broadway gossip peddler*

Bernard Wolfe

LIKE MOST craftsmen who take their work seriously, Mort Robell has a workshop. It is not a studio, an office, a laboratory or loft, but a phone booth — one particular phone booth, located in a drugstore on a certain corner in the upper reaches of Times Square. In this cubicle Mort Robell plies his highly complex trade as an artificer of mass mood and sculptor of public opinion.

That is the best way to locate Mort Robell in cultural space: think of him at work in a telephone booth at the intersection of Seventh Avenue and Fifty-First Street, dialing Walter Winchell's number. Forever dialing Walter Winchell's number, patiently, ritualistically, as other men dedicated to their callings twirl centrifuges or finger their beads.

For it is through Walter Winchell, through all the Winchells, that Mort Robell, perambulant press agent, artifices mood and sculpts opinion.

Keep that midtown mezzotint sharply in mind: frothy gent, forty-ish, receding hairline, deeply tanned, munching on a panatella, tie like a medical-book illustration of cirrhosis of the liver, crammed into a workshop the size of a coffin, dialing. Now, to put a frame around the picture — to see the craftsman within the boundaries of his craft — get a copy of the New York Classified Telephone Directory and turn to the P's.

You will note that under "Public Relations Counselors" there are no less than 393 agencies listed, and under "Publicity Service Bureaus"

another 235. Over six hundred agencies, employing around ten thousand people. Around ten thousand people who, although they may wear rear-vented Brooks Brothers flannels instead of flashy pinstripes, although they may operate out of suites in Radio City and the Squibb Building rather than a drugstore phone booth, are all, in essence, replicas of Mort Robell.

JUST WHAT are the ten thousand Mort Robells up to? Look at it this way: information, or what can pass for information, has become one of our major industries. Thanks to the perfection of our so-called mass media — newspapers, radio, television, movies, bestsellers, comic books, magazines — a vast network of funnels has been laced so intimately into the matrix of our society that it commandeers the public's eyes and ears. There is a mass hunger for confidential tips. In fact, we want to know more than there is to know: our demand for information far exceeds the supply which can be made available by sober reporters. So, at the dispensing ends of the funnels, there have come into being corps of experts to manufacture supplementary materials and send them on their winged way — "information specialists" who start with a pitch and emerge with a bulletin, disguising con as candor. The prefabrication of fact has become a craft.

Of course, there is a hierarchy

among the prefabricators. On the topmost rungs are those efficient specialists who represent foreign governments and great corporations and whose function is as often to filter damaging notices out of the informational stream as to feed slanted ones in — the Ivy Lees and Carl Byoirs and Russell Birdwells and Edward Bernayses. Below them are the Steve Hannagans, who publicize a Sun Valley into existence and plant photographs of bathing beauties for the Miami Chamber of Commerce; below them, the theatrical publicity men and press agents, the talented, literate Richard Maney and Michel Moks.

Several levels below these, way down in the Broadway sub-cellar, there is — Mort Robell. His corporation is in his hat, his bank account in his rear pocket. But, like his swankier colleagues in the counseling and servicing agencies, he is a clearinghouse for doctored data. And, as is the case with his colleagues, his aim in all this prefabrication of sights and sounds is simply to make people like certain things which will prove profitable to certain other

Bernard Wolfe, who bases his article on an intimate working knowledge of at least two dozen of the species press agent, was co-author with jazz immortal Mezz Mezzrow of Really the Blues. Currently he is at work on a novel to be published by Random House in 1952.

people: his clients.

What jerrybuilt information is Mort Robell so intent on siphoning into Walter Winchell's ear from that pay station just off Broadway? Nothing world-shaking. Mort has an exclusive. There's a bimbo named Lovis Doreen who's an exotic dancer. (Translation: a stripteaser who starts her act with a breakaway sari* and a spider monkey on her shoulder — the type of performer about whom Gypsy Rose Lee once remarked that "she dresses to the nines but completely overlooks her ones, twos, threes, fours, fives, sixes, sevens and eights.") This Lovis is currently appearing in a festooned fleabag on Fifty-Second Street called the Jim-Jam Club. Lovis has just pulled Mort's coat about something, strictly off the record. Aly Khan, reputed to have been left broken-hearted back in Paris by the Princess Margherita, is really in this country incognito — Lovis knows because just last night she was at a very private party with him and reports that he does a mean rhumba. Lovis also intimates that she and Aly hit it off fine and there's a very, very good chance she'll be joining him in Biarritz next month for a Mediterranean cruise on his yacht. All in the spirit of good clean fun, you understand:

* For those who have difficulty keeping up abreast of recent developments in the American language, Mr. Wolfe has thoughtfully appended a glossary.

it's just a great big beautiful friendship. Etc. Exclusive, natch.

How can the publication of this item affect the personal fortunes of Mort Robell? In a number of ways. First, as press agent for Lovis Doreen, he has to get her mentioned in the columns to keep her shelling out his fee of twenty bucks a week; she's been kicking about the paucity of items lately. Second, if this exclusive appears the Jim-Jam Club may be packed for a couple nights: people will come to gaze with wild surmise on the bare skin of the coozie who kept a tryst with the fabulous Aly. ("Neatest tryst of the week": good line; Winchell could maybe use it for a paragraph lead-in.) If that should happen it is conceivable that the owner of the Jim-Jam, who now refers to Mort as a "no-space mom-mix" — meaning that he doesn't know how to crash the columns — will be sufficiently impressed to hire Mort as a press agent at maybe thirty skins a week. With that much added take, Mort may be able to pay his back hotel rent. He needs his hotel room, and not just to stash his frame in. For one thing, he can be reached by phone there. For another, where else can he shack up with Lovis on the one night in ten when he feels like shacking up with somebody? *Her* place is out — she's married to a song-plugger who's extremely jealous, brooding type, does weight-lifting for a hobby. Everybody to his own centrifuge.

THE DRUGSTORE which Mort Robell makes his daytime headquarters is known as Hanson Chemists, Inc. It was once described by an old and soured Broadway hand as "The Crossroads of the Whirled:" a hang-out for young theatrical hopefuls who have migrated to The Apple from America and, while waiting for the breaks and writing home for eating moola, trade neon daydreams over a coke. A counterman at Hanson's who has observed Mort Robell over the years says of him, "He always looks good. The creep, why shouldn't he look good? No matter when you see him, he just got up."

On a typical day Robell opens his eyes at about one o'clock in the afternoon. It is a bad moment for him: he contemplates the sunbeams with horror, any bed companion he may have with exasperation, and the prospect of another day with nausea. It is not that he has a hangover — he never drinks anything stronger than beer, sometimes just celery tonic. The trouble is that he is a victim of chronic anxiety — the willies, the jumps — which tends to subside only when it is comfortably past sunset and the nine-to-five feebs have all lit out for the suburbs and he senses that millions of people are again swarming in nocturnal abandon around him. At midday he feels only that he is naked and alone, with all the props of Broadway sodality cut out from under him, and, for no logical reason that he can ever

think of, he is afraid of dying.

After a while he goes to the window in his shorts and looks down at the office workers flitting along Forty-Seventh Street. He groans. Acid taste in his mouth: he wonders if he's getting an ulcer. Retreating, he gives his face a once-over-lightly with his electric razor, takes a quick shower, lolls under the sun lamp for a few minutes. Then he opens the closet door and considers which of the four sets of togs hanging there he will wear today.

These suits are all sharp drapes, long of jacket and well-padded of shoulder, all in the \$100-\$150 class, and they were obtained in interesting, if unorthodox, ways. The story behind the gray sharkskin and the brown gabardine is as follows. One day not too long ago, as Robell was scanning the scratch sheet, he came upon an entry in the afternoon's races at Narragansett by the name of Mort, Mort Something-or-other. Although he is not a gambling man, the press agent understandably took this as a good omen and called a bookie to place a sizable bet. The plater was a long shot; when it came in Mort collected something well over four hundred dollars. That night he told the story to a columnist in Lindy's.

"You jerk," the columnist said. "The Mort in that name doesn't stand for Morton. The nag's full monicker is Mort d'Arthur, that means the death of Arthur. You

copped the four hundred because you're an illiterate schmo." The columnist stopped to study the press agent with an acidulous look prompted partly by duodenal ulcers, partly by genuine revulsion. "But maybe your hunch was right at that," he went on. "Maybe *your* real name is Mort de Robell and you just never learned how to spell it."

The news so unnerved Robell that, by way of making a magic gesture to take the curse off his winnings, he hurried over to the Broadway offices of the Damon Runyan Cancer Fund and made a donation of five dollars. The evil eye thus averted, along with all other forms of hex, whammy, and squitch, he proceeded to Phil Kronfeld's and bought himself the sharkskin and the gabardine for three hundred clams plus sales tax.

THE NAVY blue serge and the powder-blue pinstripe were come by rather differently. In one of the real cool Broadway haberdasheries there is a real cool little brunette named Dottie who keeps the firm's books and spends an occasional weekend in Atlantic City with the store manager. Dottie has a wide acquaintanceship among the hoods, bookies, and song-pluggers who frequent the neighborhood, and to accommodate these clothes-conscious friends of hers she has developed a mutually profitable personal service. When one of her sidekicks needs a suit he

drops in and cases a few things, then calls Dottie and gives her the stock number on the garment which took his fancy; as soon as she can manage it, Dottie heists said garment off the racks and slips it to her pal for a fee one-fourth to one-half the retail bite.

The night Dottie delivered the serge and the pinstripe, Mort took her to dinner at Ruby Foo's. Now, Dottie stands in considerable awe of literary types — fellows who make with the words: police reporters, columnists, Tin Pan Alley lyricists, gagmen, press agents — and she therefore regards it as an honor to deal with Mort. As usual, she offered no objection when he suggested they drop around to his hotel to light up after dinner. (Her evenings are generally free: her husband plays alto sax in a second-string mambo band and is often away on one-night stands.) After amusing himself with the bookkeeper in the iconoclastic ways he prefers and she goes along with — she rather enjoys being roughed up, especially by literary-type fellows — Mort told her to get lost and that was that. No monies changed hands. Dottie thought it would be indelicate to bring up the matter with such a literary-type fellow. The two hundred dollar sets of threads were freebies: they cost Mort one chop suey feed, plus a little exercise, plus a little nausea.

Today the pinstripe suits his mood. He climbs into it, loads the

breast pocket with cigars, takes the elevator down, eases out through the coffee shop off the lobby to avoid being questioned by the desk clerk about his back rent, and heads up Seventh for Hanson's, eyes glued to the pavement to dodge the glare of the sun and the sight of people with that nowhere aura of nine-to-five about them. Looking good, feeling bluh. At the drugstore counter, over a cup of black coffee, he does his basic research: peruses the gossip columns, browses in *Variety*, studies the day's scratch sheet.

Finally the ritual is over. Now comes despair on a monocycle. Now he has got to think about his clients. In his jaundiced mind's eye he runs through the list. Little Betsy the TV bit player, the one with the giggle and the false eyelashes and the invisible brace still on her teeth. The young fairy crooner who sings just like Billy Eckstine, only with a lisp. The crumb joint on West Third Street in the Village, dike rendezvous. The adagio team, bow-legged spic with acne under the pancake and knock-kneed broad with a double chin. The young eccentric dancer, platinum in the mop and molybdenum in the left ventricle, graduate of smokers and stag parties and a string of cootch dives in Baltimore: career's being sponsored by two gentlemen friends, a Seventh Avenue girdle manufacturer and a flat-nosed associate of Joe Adonis, neither of whom is aware of the other's exist-

ence. (She collects from both.) The female impersonator who wants to make a try for television as soon as he gets a few more shots of testosterone. Mort Robell grimaces. Creeps and creep joints: not good for a hundred of the green ones between them. And not a plantable yarn in the lot. Not even the makin's of a yarn. Lovis. His best bet is Lovis. Better put the steeple to work on the Aly Khan item, that one's sizzling.

He gets a couple dollars' worth of dimes (fuming inwardly: he takes it as a personal affront, a move in restraint of the press agent's trade, that the telephone company has raised the bite to ten cents) and slides into his usual phone booth. He dials Walter Winchell's number. Dame's voice says he's not in.

At this precise moment, although Mort Robell doesn't know it, Aly Khan is sashaying across the dance floor of the Club Florence, a chic nightclub in the Montmartre section of Paris. The girl in his arms is Joan Fontaine, he is whispering in her ear and she is smiling. Each to his own centrifuge.

MORT ROBELL is not the only item planter operating out of a Times Square pay booth. There are some fifteen or twenty of these professional cavedroppers and peeping-toms roaming the midtown sector, maybe more. The sociological process whereby these magpies were de-

posited in the drugstores and cigar stores of Broadway was a long and devious one, a chapter in the tumultuous history of America's far-flung, far-fetched communications system.

Back in the miss-meal era of the Thirties, Americans were hungering for psychic security. To satisfy this yearning, and also to lighten the bleak lives of the pit-dwellers with tales of hijinks in the gossamer precincts, the gossip column came into existence. American journalism was suddenly hypoed by the appearance of a whole army of Winchells, Louis Sobols, Mark Hellingers, Sidney Skolskys, Vi Dudleys, O. O. McIntyres; a new battery of funnels conveying a floodlight of tattle and blab to the masses. A ringside seat at the most fabulous peepshow on earth was provided, and, in between trips to the relief office, America ogled.

But there was a hitch: soon the tattlers found that they did not have enough to gossip about — the eyes and ears of America were insatiable. The situation cried out for intermediaries between the gossipers and those who wanted to be gossiped about; what was needed was that spiny, scampering species of Broadway fauna called the press agent. Overnight this professional magpie came into existence. Business-like entrepreneurs entered the chatter field and set up well-staffed offices: George Lottman, Harry Sobol and Lee "Harlemania" Posner, among others. The chief gimmick in all

their operations was to feed the columnists such a welter of meaty gossip that, out of sheer gratitude, they would let an occasional subsidized mention slip by. But even for the legits there was a chronic dearth of news. Since reality was not newsworthy enough, it had to be manipulated, and reportage yielded to reverie. For example, when Sobol's client, crooner Russ Columbo, opened at the Brooklyn Paramount, nothing happened that was worth mentioning, absolutely nothing. On opening night, therefore, Sobol sent Columbo fifty dollars' worth of roses with the initials "G. G." plainly inscribed on the bundle; when they arrived at the stage door Columbo, following Sobol's instructions, made a great display of refusing them. The story "leaked" to the columnists, and next morning the papers appeared with the sensational headline, "Columbo Spurns Garbo." What Miss Garbo thought of this hippodromed slight to her imaginary advances is not known, but the stunt got Columbo a million dollars' worth of publicity and Sobol, no doubt, a bonus. In the Age of the Unbuttoned Lip, the consumption of scandal outstrips production: hence the press agent, arbiter between short supply and runaway demand.

Those were fancy-free, fact-unencumbered days, the Thirties: days when Jay Faggen painted a big red swastika on the lobby floor of the

languishing Harlem Uproar House and ran home to bed while cops and photographers swarmed over the place; days when, through a press agent's good offices, strongman Charles Atlas appeared before the inmates of Ossining Penitentiary in his leopard skin to lecture on body building, only to be given the heave-ho by the warden because he absent-mindedly launched into an illustrated lecture on bending iron bars; days when you could get a cheesecake shot of almost any shipooi in any paper by declaring that she had just been chosen "Girl I'd Most Like To Be Snowed In With In An Igloo" by the Eskimo Rotary Club of Upper Baffin Bay. Intergalaxial space was the limit and the less businesslike operators, the Mort Robells, could flourish.

Flourish they did. There were dozens of Robells on The Street in those days — an ex-busboy, an ex-ice skater, an ex-pimp who had always admired words from a distance — all hazy of syntax but fond of the gregarious life, the status and easy money. They hobnobbed with the hoods and big mob guys; they were rich in the lunatic lore of Broadway, knew who had slept with whom and who had machinegunned whom; they were on backslapping terms with the columnists, commanded respect from chorus girls and politicians, and seldom had to pick up the check at Lindy's. While others were selling apples on streetcorners, they

lorded it over The Apple.

But something happened. The war came and went. Back from the armed forces straggled all the bright young graduates of N.Y.U. who had served their apprenticeship under the Sobols and Lottmans — literate men, imbued with the orderly nine-to-five mentality, and with a shrewd understanding of the business which has been described by one of them as "a never-ending trip to *Canard-sie*." They set up their own offices and began to operate systematically, eschewing haphazard stunt operations and exposing the practices of their sleazier colleagues. ("Today the game is full of finks," Robell complains. "Agents blowing the whistle on agents, brother oontzing out brother, where's the ethics to it?")

Quite a few of them reached the twenty-five-thousand-dollar class; in time they created a sort of trade association, the Publicists Guild, which, today, stipulates the terms of a respectable press agent's contract. They are, in short, very far from the pay-booth level of operation: they have become plush-officed public relations counselors and publicity service bureaus. Thanks to such nine-to-fivers, the Mort Robells are fast coming to be known as "no-space creeps." Winchell does not answer Mort Robell's phone call for a very good reason: he is too busy reading the communiqués of the nine-to-five boys.

BITCH OF a day. Several dollars' worth of dimes down the drain; Mort has not been able to reach Winchell or any other columnist. Night has flipfopped in: the signs are blinking out their spectacular propaganda, the Bond Store's fifty-foot plasticine Adam and Eve are still posing in neon virginity across from the Astor, still bemusedly casing The Apple. Mort has had his hot pastrami sandwich and celery tonic at the Stage Door Delicatessen and now he embarks on his early rounds, still looking good, still vaguely nauseated. Toots Shor's. Blair House. The Stork. The Copa. Lindy's. Sardi's. Shubert Alley. The Blue Angel. Jimmy Ryan's. Birdland. Standing at bar after bar, table hopping, looking each place over to see who's boozing with whom, trying to put two and two together to make a plantable triangle, nursing a beer and keeping his eye peeled. No luck. The whole evening long he hasn't run into Walter or Leonard Lyons or Earl Wilson or Dorothy Kilgallen or Ed Sullivan or Jack Lait or Hy Gardner or even Nick Kenny. Not even Nick Kenny. Nobody he can even try to drop his item on. Staring into a cup of coffee at Hanson's, he is bereft of gimmicks and angles. He is thinking about his room rent and his stomach is doing nip-ups.

One of the pay phones rings, an unemployed juggler answers it and waves to Mort. Who can it be — Lovis? The lisping crooner? Win-

chell? The world is suddenly teeming with possibilities. He hurries to the booth. It's Ned, glamor-boy Ned. Just in from the Coast, on his way to Paris to make a picture, stopping over in town for a few hours. Would Mort by any chance know a nice girl to keep him company for a few hours?

"Sure, kid," Mort says. "Give me an hour at the outside. I'll straighten you. . . . Sure I know what you like, leave it to me. What hotel you at? . . . Room number? . . . Got it. Hour at the outside."

When he hangs up he begins to think fast. He's done little favors like this for Ned before, he's got good contacts, Ned appreciates that. But who's available right now, tonight? Lovis? She takes it off at the Jim-Jam until three. Dottie? Too brassy for Ned's taste — he likes them young and sweet and not soiled by too much handling. Who, then? Betsy! Betsy. Ambitious kid, do anything for a break. Cute too — unspoiled, mybe, but very ambitious. Betsy.

He dials, she's at home. He explains about this big movie star being in town, old friend of his.

"It took a lot of doing, kid," he explains, "it took a whole *lot* of doing, but I fixed you up with him. He's dying to meet you. It's a real break, now if you play your cards right. . . ."

In a half hour she shows up in front of Hanson's in a cab, dressed

in a knocked-out strapless, bloomers more out than in, all excited. On the way to the hotel she keeps beating her gums. Will the dreamboat take her to the Copa? To the Stork? Will there be photographers, did Mort arrange for photographers?

"Relax, baby," Mort says. "It'll work out. It's just a little private party, see? It could develop in any direction, practically anything could come out of it, but the way it starts out it's just a party."

The question on Mort's mind doesn't have anything to do with photographers. It is this: he is doing a favor for Ned, what can he ask Ned to do for *him*? In this kind of deal there's a pay-off — what's the best pay-off under the circumstances? Could he — for instance, could he ask Ned to buzz Winchell or somebody and let it drop that he was just at a very private party and saw Lovis with Aly Khan? Or maybe Ned could toss the item to some newspaperman when he gets to Paris, might sound more authentic that way? Angles to this thing, it's got to be handled right. Can't oink a guy like Ned into just anything, still —

They're in the corridor, at Ned's suite. Mort presses the button. The door opens and there is the great man, all profile and marcelle, in his dressing gown. Mort does the honors: Mr. Brrrr, meet Miss Bzzzz. Betsy steps in, much heaving of bloomers and batting of store-bought lashes.

"Thanks, pal," Ned says, holding his hand out. "How's it going? I'll be in touch with you." The door closes, Mort is left standing in the hallway looking at the neatly folded fifty-dollar bill in his palm.

Little Betsy won't be seeing any Copa tonight. Not tonight. She's going to be miles away from the flash-bulb circuit. It may be a little rough on her, she's most likely an innocent, but what the hell. She'll be nice, Ned's too important to be anything but nice with. Only hassle with Ned she doesn't know about, she won't be seeing him again, he's strictly a one-night-stand man. Ned suffers from a kind of frustration common in the entertainment world. After each encounter, he winds up by blaming the girl for his lack of fulfillment and kissing her off so he can go looking for another one. This type of mentality lies behind a good deal of Broadway and Hollywood promiscuity. Mort laughs at it in Ned but, naturally, he's got it too. It leads to an eroticism based on the will o' the wisp principle; fulfillment is always in the next guy's address book. But the kid will make out all right. She'll be pieced off too. And she can use half a hundred, she hasn't had even a walk-on on TV in three months.

Of course, Mort muses, the fifty skins changes the picture. Now he can't ask Ned for any pay-off, he's already been paid off. He'll have to figure another angle on the Lovis

item, too bad.

Still, fifty skins is fifty skins. Fifty! Just for making one lousy phone call! Better than twice the scratch he gets for knocking his brains out all week trying to promote one lousy line for Lovis!

First real break today!

ONE FINAL point about the ten thousand Mort Robells. There is now a whole science devoted to the study of the eyes and ears glued to our mass-media funnels — the science developed by the Gallops and the Ropers and the Hooper Raters, known as opinion research. (There are ten “Public Opinion Analysts” listed as such in the Red Book too.) And, according to the scientists, the problems of communications are pretty much the same all over, in the social organism as in the single animal organism; it’s all a matter of finding out what happens when the funnels get overloaded and jam or shortcircuit, then devising traffic schemes to keep them working at optimum transmission efficiency. That’s the main thing, optimum transmission efficiency.

From the point of view of optimum transmission efficiency it is probably a moot point whether Mort Robell’s item about Lovis Doreen is good or bad. But, it should be added, it is also a moot question as to just what the sights and sounds prefabricated by the other ten thousand experts do for the funnels.

Does the doctored datum facilitate the flow or corrode the funnels? And suppose the flow *is* stepped up, what then? What happens to the eyes and ears it gushes into — do they get sharper, or become confused and insensitive? Does a man become more alive, or more of a slug, when his moods and opinions are pawed over incessantly by ten thousand artificers and sculptors? Hard to say. Maybe the new scientists, the public opinion analysts, will come up with the answer to that one. Meantime, we probably should not be too hard on Mort Robell. In a sense, he has been a pioneer. He is part of the gargantuan history of the American communications system — a slave to the funnels like the rest of us, but at the other end. . . .

Back at his hotel he manages to sneak up the stairs without the night clerk spotting him. He gets Symphony Sid on his radio and listens to some real cool all-roony bop. He sits down at the typewriter and tries to bat out some column items, including the Doreen-Khan one, but it’s no go. Old steeple filled with pigeons tonight, he’s feeling a little sick to his stomach.

Suddenly he sits up straight. He’s just remembered something, something real gone. It was back five, six years ago. There was a press agent hanging around Hanson’s who needed a break real bad. Then he heard about a certain columnist’s wife had just gone to the hospital

to have a baby, so he called the columnist and gave him this flipped spiel about a big toe and —

Mort's mind is reaching for something. Something else he should remember. Something about hospitals, columnists and hospitals. Reaching hard, straining —

Got it! Oo-wee! It comes to him in a flash. Three or four weeks ago, when he was down at the Damon Runyan Cancer Fund shelling out his fivespot, he heard a bit of news. About Jerry's old lady. About Jerry's old lady being in Doctor's Hospital with cancer of the intestine.

Jerry! Why didn't he think of Jerry before? Jerry's column is a nowhere feature in a booger-bug paper, but still. The Aly Khan item is plenty hot, if it appears anywhere it's a cinch to be picked up, maybe even by the wire services, might even get national coverage. And Jerry's a real square, still wet behind the byline — he's so new to The Street that chances are he's never even heard the story about the press agent and the columnist's wife who went to the hospital and the big toe. . . .

Jerry's still in his office, answers the phone himself.

"Jerry? Mort Robell. How's it going, kid? . . . Listen, Jerry, don't give me the brush, I got something hot for you. Just heard it from Lovis Doreen over at the Jim-Jam, that's with a hyphen in the middle. Lovis was with Aly Khan last night, he's

in town incognito, you can have it exclusive. . . ."

He talks for a while, glib, racy, high-pressure, then he listens for a while. He begins to frown. His gut is acting up for real now: he's a craftsman but they won't let him artifice, won't let him sculpt, they're crowding him hard and he's afraid of dying and he thinks maybe he's got an ulcer coming on.

"Listen, Jerry." As he talks he rubs the split-C-note in his pocket like a rabbit's foot, spinning his centrifuge, fingering his beads. "Look, kid, I need this break. I'm in a spot, see, I'm desperate. Here's how desperate I am, kid, just to give you an idea this is no hype. I was sorry to hear about your mother, kid, naturally I got my fingers crossed and here's wishing her nothing but the best, but if you don't give me this break, listen, I got no choice, I'm going to cut off my big toe and send it to your mother in the hospital. Don't get me wrong now, not that —"

Meanwhile, in a Paris newspaper office just off the Champs Élysées, a machine is purring. It's a telephoto machine, triumph of the modern communications system; it's operating at optimum transmission efficiency now and what it's transmitting out over the Atlantic is the very first photo of Aly Khan doing the rumba with Joan Fontaine while she listens to his whispered words and smiles, listens and smiles.

GLOSSARY

all-roony: phrase invented by Slim

Gaillard, denoting approbation.

bimbo: dame.

bite: price.

bloobers: breasts.

bluh: onomatopoesy for nausea.

booger-bug: bedbug; term of derogation.

breakaway sari: a sort of sarong, designed so as to fall off at one zip.

case: look over carefully, as a preliminary to heisting.

chop suey: the Broadway version of manna.

clams: dollars.

cool: bop phrase meaning fine.

cootch: shake dance.

Copa: nightclub called the Copacabana.

coozie: dame.

creep: derogatory expression, an ineffectual person.

dike: Lesbian.

drabes: suits, clothes.

feeb: feeble-minded person who works for a living.

flipped: wild, crazy, blowtop, gone.

freebie: anything that's for free.

green ones: dollars.

gone: wild, out of this world; term of approbation.

heist: to stick up, to rob.

bassle: difficulty, argument.

hippodrome: make a big thing out of, publicize widely.

hype: a gag, a pretense.

hypo: to stimulate, as a shot in the arm does.

miss-meal: literally from hunger.

light up: smoke reefers.

mommix: a creep, chump, jerk.

moola: money.

mop: hair.

nowhere: term of derogation.

oink into: talk somebody into doing something for you.

oontz out: get rid of, brush off.

pull somebody's coat: let him in on a secret, enlighten him.

piece off: pay off.

skins: dollars.

squitch: the evil eye.

stash your frame: lie down, go to bed.

steeple: head, brain.

split-C-note: half-century note, that is, a fifty-dollar bill.

shipoopie: dame.

scratch: loot, that is, money.

scratch sheet: Broadway edition of the *Wall Street Journal*.

The Apple: New York, the big city.

The Street: Broadway.

take: income, profit.

ulcers: occupational disease of the preoccupied and unoccupied around Broadway.

Variety: show business weekly, Broadway edition of the *New York Herald Tribune*.

whammy: the evil eye.

BUCKLEY

versus YALE

max eastman

A seasoned iconoclast considers a young campus rebel

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY'S book with the brilliant title, *God and Man at Yale*,* will kick up a glorious controversy. And the controversy won't be about Yale. It will be about college education in the United States, the rights of teachers to teach what they believe, and the rights of those who employ teachers to get the kind of teaching they want. Mr. Buckley's most original and challenging idea is that essential freedom is the freedom of the customer to buy what he wants on the market. The alumni of a college who support it, and the parents who pay their children's

tuition, are customers, and the commodity they are buying is education. He assumes that the customers of a college like Yale want their children taught the Christian religion and the free enterprise economy — that is the kind of education they think they are buying. And they are getting gypped, he says, on both counts.

Having just been through a Yale education, Mr. Buckley speaks with inside, or rather underside, authority on the subject, and also with great gusto. He names names and quotes quotes, and conducts himself, in general, with a disrespect for his teachers that is charming and stimulating in a high degree. It was always a particular joy if some boy

*Henry Regnery Publishing Company, Chicago.

got up the nerve to throw an eraser or a piece of chalk when the teacher turned his back. Bill Buckley throws a whole handful right at the teacher and right while he is looking. This perhaps is the best feature of his book, certainly the most American in the old style — its arrant intellectual courage. Yale, instead of belling, should pin a ribbon on this upstanding alumnus. His book deals a needed body-blow to the rather languidly genteel, Arrow-collarish, suavely sporty, and securely innocuous “Yale man” that inhabits the public mind.

Unfortunately, the book joins together two subjects that, in discussing education, ought to be rigidly separated, religion and public policy — or as it reads on Buckley’s banner, “God and Man.” For my part, I fail to see why God can not take care of Himself at Yale, or even for that matter at Harvard. To me it is ridiculous to see little, two-legged fanatics running around the earth fighting and arguing in behalf of a Deity whom they profess to consider omnipotent. Yale’s policy of offering adequate courses on religion in general, and also on particular religions, including the Christian, for those who want it, and not forcing it on those who don’t, is dignified and wise. I would even say it is religious. It is at least a policy upon which both the religious, if they are serenely and profoundly so, and the irreligious, if they are not them-

selves fanatics, can agree. Thus I think the thing to do with Mr. Buckley’s chapter about God at Yale is to cross it out and forget it.

I suspect that Mr. Buckley will be crossing out that chapter himself before long. For he is very young — young enough to announce that the struggle for Christianity and individualism are, on different levels, “the same struggle” — an opinion which must have been carefully protected against reflection since nursery days. Youth, however, is not a sin, especially when evidenced by an excess rather than a paucity of logic. And that is what Mr. Buckley suffers from. Life will, I suppose, ease him into the understanding that if ex-President Seymour in an inaugural address called on all members of the faculty to recognize the tremendous power of the teachings of Christ, that doesn’t mean that the professor of anthropology has to bring his pupils to Jesus.

HIS SECOND CHAPTER, “Individualism at Yale,” is by contrast entirely mature. And it is devastating. He comes out of Yale with the conviction, and he certainly conveys it to his reader, that the politics of advancing collectivism and steadily increasing state control are being systematically inculcated in American boys who go to Yale. Quoting a speech of the Dean appealing to the graduating class of 1949 to take the adventure and enterprise of the

1849ers, instead of the mollicoddle ideal of "security," as their standard, he remarks:

"If the recent Yale graduate, who exposed himself to Yale economics during his undergraduate years, exhibits enterprise, self-reliance, and independence, it is only because he has turned his back on his teachers and texts. It is because he has not hearkened to those who assiduously disparage the individual, glorify the government, enshrine security, and discourage self-reliance."

This ominous statement — which does not concern Communism at all, by the way, but only the slow crawl toward collectivism and the all-powerful state — is backed up with astounding quotations from the four textbooks used in the elementary course in economics at Yale during the last five years. (Still more astounding, perhaps, is an appendix listing 344 other colleges and universities where one, or all, of these same textbooks are used.) After detailed quotation Mr. Buckley sums up the general drift of opinion in these four textbooks as follows:

All of society's ills — the economic, the social, the ethical — can be ameliorated by Bigger and Bigger Government. No consideration of private property or individual economic freedom is to deter the government from spending "up to the point where the marginal loss of satisfaction to those providing the revenue is just equal to the marginal gain

in satisfaction derived by those benefiting from the expenditures" (Bowman and Bach, p. 720); and no doubts are expressed as to whether even the wisest government can know where this point is. The government, it seems, is to weigh numerical losses and gains in satisfaction; and just so long as there is a net gain (an intangible which the government is to interpret), any government policy is justified. Individual rights of the sort that for generations were never supposed to be prey to government action, are cheerily disregarded as unjustifiable *impedimenta* in the way of purposive and enlightened state policies. . . .

MR. BUCKLEY is attacked in the current *Atlantic Monthly* by another Yale man, a very irate one, McGeorge Bundy, Associate Professor of Government at Harvard. In his way Professor Bundy also deals a blow to the popular concept of the Yale man, for his literary manners are far from those associated with this genteel concept. It is all right to lambaste Mr. Buckley, if he makes you that mad, as "a twisted and ignorant young man." But to call him "dishonest" without detailed and cogent proof is hardly in the Yale spirit.

After reading Mr. Buckley's book and Mr. Bundy's attack on it, I remain convinced that the students of economics at Yale are being pretty well indoctrinated, by and large, with the principles of creeping so-

cialism. Buckley's analysis of those textbooks may be somewhat impetuous — it has to be cursory — but if there is "trickery" in it, Bundy shirks what should be the easy task of proving this with texts. The cry of pain with which Buckley concludes this chapter: "Individualism is dying at Yale — and without a fight," is out of an honestly anguished heart. And it really needs no more justification than the one simple statement, which Bundy does not oppose, that in the textbooks in question "no credit is given — not even in a footnote — to the serious works of serious students who insist that abridgment of freedom is an inescapable product of government planning." No fair hearing is given to such wise economists as Röpke, Hayek, Jewkes, von Mises. The whole neo-liberal, or "liberal conservative," school, whose warnings are, in the opinion of growing numbers of thoughtful people, the most important in the world, is left outside the door. Could it be that Professor Bundy himself has so strong a bias against these men that he hardly realizes what Mr. Buckley is exercised about?

He graciously assures us that in attacking Buckley's book he does not "mean to say, or wish to say, that Yale is perfect." And this generous concession makes it possible to suggest that, in spite of his youth and his too great confidence in logic, Mr. Buckley's criticisms may

do Yale a lot of good.

It certainly won't do what Mr. Buckley hopes it will, and that is a good thing. For his inexperience becomes really dangerous when he begins to suggest remedies. He wants to replace the collectivist indoctrination with a counter-indoctrination. He doesn't call it by that name; he calls it "value-inculcation"; but it comes to the same thing. He would fire the professors who teach insidious collectivism — he does not specify which ones — and hire others who would teach uncompromising individualism. Academic freedom, he points out truly enough, is not absolute; there are plenty of things you can't teach at Yale, Communism among them. And he would add a few more — agnosticism, atheism, collectivism, the Bigger and Bigger state. He is aware that such restrictions can not be applied in the field of scholarly enquiry; here academic freedom must indeed be absolute. But he would meet this difficulty by establishing a total separation between the profession of teaching and that of research, and he would have all endowments earmarked accordingly. You can't say he isn't radical, if radical means ready to pull things up by the roots and change them!

I share the feeling of Mr. Buckley that individualism is dying, not only at Yale but all over the country, and dying at the hands of the Bigger and Bigger Government. And I

want to do something about it. But I don't think the thing to do is to narrow the sphere of academic freedom. Least of all do I think it should be narrowed, as Mr. Buckley suggests, by action of the Yale alumni. I can't imagine anything that would botch up the business both of education and research more completely than a march on New Haven of the Yale alumni. To one who has lived in a college town and watched the alumni come back, the idea, I fear, will only provoke a smile. . . .

The question of the free-market versus the state-planned economy is under debate throughout the free world. The debate is a vital one. In the opinion of the free-market side, all our freedom — our civilization itself — is at stake. This justifies the passion, and the extremism, of Mr. Buckley's protest. For the debate is

not being fairly conducted at Yale. John Chamberlain says in his Introduction: "The Yale economics faculty is roughly 8 to 2 for economic collectivism on the evidence of this book." And those who are for collectivism have paramount influence, as is proven by the textbooks used, in shaping the undergraduate mind.

The conclusion I draw from all this is a modest one: namely, that the debate *should be* fairly conducted. Both sides should be adequately represented. The administration should see to it that they are. And I am optimistic enough to believe that this will happen in the near future. It will happen as a direct result of Mr. Buckley's book. And that is high praise for the book, which is brilliant, sincere, well-informed, keenly reasoned, and exciting to read.

Excerpts from *God and Man at Yale*

● No one should be so naïve as to expect that I could conjure up a list of professors and textbooks who advocate the overthrow, violently or otherwise, of all vestiges of capitalism in favor of an ironclad, comprehensive socialist state. There is very little of this at Yale; but this approach is not needed to accomplish, ultimately, the same transformation. Marx himself, in the course of his lifetime, envisaged two broad lines of action that could be adopted to destroy the bourgeoisie: one was violent revolution; the other, a slow increase of state power, through extended social services, taxation, and regulation, to a point where a smooth transition could be effected from an individualist to a collectivist society. The Communists have come to scorn the latter method, but it is nevertheless evident that

the prescience of their most systematic and inspiring philosopher has not been thereby vitiated.

It is a revolution of the second type, one that advocates a slow but relentless transfer of power from the individual to the state, that has roots in the Department of Economics at Yale, and unquestionably in similar departments in many colleges throughout the country.

● What has happened to the doctrine of private property rights which emerged during the Enlightenment as an indispensable element of personal freedom? What about the right to go into business for one's self? Scarcely any reference is made to these rights even though these economists anxiously embrace morality and justice as proper subject matter of their investigation. Morgan,* alone, breaks silence when he tells us:

Probably, majority opinion agrees with our own national policy that the right of a man to engage in business for himself is not a basic freedom, like freedom from fear, want, freedom of speech and of worship. It is a right which only about one in five of our working force finds himself able, or finds it worth while, to accept [p. 175].

It seems, then, that the volume of indulgence in any given freedom is a relevant factor in determining whether or not it is, properly, a "basic freedom." If, that is to say, only one of five persons goes into business for himself, then the right of man to engage in business for himself is not basic. One out of tens of thousands of men chooses to get up in public and make a speech. Therefore freedom to address assemblies is not basic. Only one out of a hundred thousand decides to start a newspaper. What happens to freedom of the press? And one out of a million will write an economic textbook. Ought Mr. Morgan to have been allowed this privilege?

Besides, Mr. Morgan, *who* says our "national policy" does not admit as basic the freedom to go into business for one's self? Does the Constitution say it? Does the Republican national platform so declare? Or the Democratic National Committee? Has the ex-small business man, Mr. Truman, ever said anything of the sort? And by what authority do you offer yourself as a spokesman for "majority opinion" in this matter? Morgan's pragmatic attitude is easily extended to include free enterprise itself:

If free enterprise is not a basic freedom, then it must be justified as a central principle of organizing production, or fail to be justified, primarily on the ground of whether it has "delivered the goods" [p. 175].

*Theodore Morgan in *Income and Employment*.

● [Ex-President of Yale]. Mr. Seymour is well aware that the privately endowed university will endure only so long as enough of its alumni and friends can afford to sustain it. They could not conceivably afford to sustain it under socialism, which would make support of Yale a luxury impossible to indulge. Since it is well known that Mr. Seymour attaches great value to the continuation of the privately endowed university, it is again clear that to serve the public welfare is to preserve an economy which, among other things, makes possible its continued existence.

But this brand of public welfare is not the brand that Yale's economists and textbooks are urging on future policy-makers. Instead, the student is impressed with the ethical economic imperative of higher and higher graduated income and inheritance taxes, capital levies through government-manipulated inflation, the abolition of capital gains exemptions — in short, the impoverishment of every imaginable financial supporter of Yale, except the government (which is not impoverishable).

Mr. Seymour has unequivocally ruled against accepting government money. The consequences of this he regards as disastrous. But there will be no other money for Yale if the points of view of many Yale teachers and texts finally blossom into legislation — that is, to a greater degree than they have already.

In other words, Yale is not only working *against* the public welfare, as Mr. Seymour understands the public welfare, but she is also working toward her own destruction, i.e., to the day when some future Yale president, fedora in hand, will knock at the door of some politician with palm outstretched. This day, of course, means the end of Yale as a private institution.

● I see no problem as regards *refining* our values, modifying them, and reinterpreting them, under the educational philosophy I envision. There is great and decisive freedom to be found within the sense-making limits of orthodoxy. Free enterprise can and should be examined, criticized, and fashioned from the heart of an institution nevertheless dedicated, until something better comes along, to preserving its general outline. Similarly, no one can criticize a Christian whose allegiance and devotion to his faith lead him to criticize and to seek to reform the temporal, ritualistic, or even organic inadequacies of his religion.

The critics of any orthodoxy, of value inculcation, are quick to presuppose a rigid, insensitive administration as a necessary feature of such an institution. I fail to see why this assumption should be valid, just as I fail to see why there is reason to believe that the wide powers conferred by the

Constitution on the Congress of the United States will inevitably be misused. Ultimately we are all at the mercy of the collective action of men. There is no alternative to faith that men will act reasonably. If pessimism about this prevailed, societal life would be impossible.

It is to be borne constantly in mind that the alumni of a private educational institution are the ultimate overseers of university policy. They can be presumed sufficiently human, sufficiently sensitive to new experience and changing situations, to move along, if circumstance warrants, to "new ideas," even if this means the complete displacement of previously cherished values. In fact, to intimate otherwise, to predict a rigidity of ideas in face of overwhelming contradictory evidence, is to gainsay in the most dramatic sense the validity of democracy.

But who will advance these new ideas if the faculty is constrained to teach existing ones? Who will unearth them? This raises the question of *who will do research*, while our concern here is with the question of *who will do the teaching*. The tradition that the same men do both bears re-examination. But we can rest confident that the governing body of an educational institution composed, we presume, of sensitive men of good faith, will honestly confront new experience as it is unearthed, wherever it is unearthed, and will be always prepared to jettison traditional ideas if the situation warrants.

President Seymour's most frequently quoted statement is "We shall seek the truth and endure the consequences." Unimaginable though the advent of such a truth is, I too should be willing to face the consequences of new experience that, for example, rendered individualism infeasible. *But this hasn't yet happened.*

In the meanwhile, at any given time, society is confronted with value alternatives, as with atheism versus faith, collectivism versus individualism. One value or the other, after thoughtful examination, ought to be embraced.

. . . [The values embraced] ought to be advanced by individual and collective action in the pulpit and in the marketplace, on the street-corner and in the living-room, in the caucus chamber and in the legislature. And they ought to be advanced in the classroom.

● In the last analysis, academic freedom must mean the freedom of men and women to supervise the educational activities and aims of the schools they oversee and support.

A noted observer explains

Why Europe Won't Fight

DAVID DALLIN¹

IN ROCQUENCOURT, a quiet French village a few miles outside the capital, there is a flat, ugly structure on the style of the innumerable, hastily constructed dwellings thrown up during the war. It was built with similar haste during a peacetime emergency, when, last December, the decision was taken to rearm the whole of the free world under the leadership and with the help of the United States. Despite its modest and awkward exterior it is one of the most important buildings in the alarm-filled world of today. The headquarters of the greatest combination of armies, navies and air-forces in history, its modest interiors hum with the activities of its staff of seven hundred under the command of General Dwight Eisenhower. Scores of daily visitors pour through its portals, more languages resound than could be heard in the tower of Babel, and the impression it makes upon the chance spectator is one of overwhelming energy, skill and confidence.

It is only natural that the brilliant

and expert corps of men stationed at Rocquencourt should be imbued with optimism. But it is an optimism generated more by a kind of collective enthusiasm than a cool appraisal of the facts. For the big question of European rearmament is not what the men of Rocquencourt are planning for the nations of the Atlantic Pact but how those nations are and will be responding to the demands made upon them.

Whenever misgivings are expressed as to the wisdom of depending upon people who show little capacity for living up to the high expectations of the planners, confident reassurances are quickly vouchsafed. Is there criticism of the French Army in the press? Well, says Major X, a little time is necessary. No doubt, things are not perfect, but the army has already improved noticeably. We have observed it at military parades and it is in much better shape than last year. War production is lagging behind? Of course, of course. Nevertheless, the figures indicate a considerable rise and we are certain

that they will continue to rise until quotas are met. Large numbers of French and Italian Communists? It cannot be denied. But we firmly hope that, in case of a war, the Italian and French Communists will fight loyally. After all, they are, in the last analysis, patriotic French and Italian citizens. . . .

Such answers involve more than simple official politeness and duplicity. Although serious efforts are made to estimate the situation realistically, the mere nature of the task seems to foster a certain amount of self-delusion and protective optimism. For the fact is that disturbing signs and developments continue to multiply. Any dispassionate, informed analysis quickly makes it plain that we must exercise caution in estimating the potential capacity of our European allies. There is little enough reason to be cheerful about the possibilities and plenty of cause for downright pessimism.

The ten countries that have banded together under the terms of the Atlantic Pact are officially known as "powers" and the list of their signatures does, in fact, include virtually every nation that has ever played a leading role in the spectacular history of European civilization. The mere presence of their joint names on a document is almost enough to cast a spell. Ever prone to exaggerate the value of collective international agreements, Americans have tended to view the union of

powers under the Atlantic Pact as a giant bulwark against aggression, as, at least, an ironclad guarantee that Europe will do its utmost in the fearful eventuality of a Third World War. If able planning were enough, the men of Rocquencourt would probably succeed in producing formidable armies that might have a decisive influence in preventing the occurrence of war, or shaping the outcome if another gigantic conflict should break upon the civilized world.

BUT THERE ARE other factors, with which no amount of planning can cope, and official optimism must be brought to consider in the cold light of reality. Will Europe really fight? But who or what, at the moment is Europe? For all practical purposes this question can be answered very simply; as far as we are concerned Europe is France and France is Europe. The prevailing political equations, the plan of future operations and current military

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strategy are all based on this conception. Contrary to geography, the language of the Atlantic Treaty and official pronouncements, the projected defense of Europe is predicated on the fighting spirit and abilities of France. Among the big three policy-determining nations of the West, France only is a continental power capable of maintaining a peacetime army to be reckoned with on European soil. The United States is an ocean away. The British Isles have never been an organic component of Europe and for centuries have been a maritime rather than a land-based power. The English "expeditionary forces" have always occupied a secondary position in Albion's fighting ranks. Whenever England has been engaged in a war on the continent, it has been in alliance with a strong land power. This tradition is still in force today, because, in the last few years, Britain has concentrated on developing a great air force. In addition to the Navy, the R.A.F. now absorbs a large share of the available manpower. In all, Britain can certainly not be depended upon to hurl a large army into the field in case of a Russian invasion of Western Europe.

On the continent, the largest nation of the West, numerically, is Italy, with its population of 47,000,000; but the day when Italy will emerge as a great power is in the remote future. Even under more favorable conditions, Italy's place

among the great powers of Europe has never been a leading one, and, since the days of the Renaissance, Italian military exploits have scarcely been outstanding. Now, after the debacle of 1943-45, with its army all but dissolved (Italy is still restricted to a maximum of 300,000 troops), with its war industries shattered, Italy will be more dependent on American aid than any other European nation. Once this aid is forthcoming, at best, Italy may attain the status of a secondary power, capable of self-defense in case of a direct attack but scarcely likely to contribute important forces to a war outside its territory.

There remain the smaller countries which are listed as "powers," chiefly through courtesy. Denmark has about 2,000 men in military units reserved for local assignments; Belgium can be counted on to supply two divisions and Holland has ready a total of 6,000 men. Portugal and Norway are expected to supply air bases rather than men. The two newcomers to the Western bloc, Turkey and Greece, are likewise expected to supply chiefly bases for the aviation of the great powers and forces able, at best, to fight local actions. Even the most optimistic survey makes it plain that it is France, and France alone, that must occupy the position of military leadership in Europe. It is France that must supply the large body of men for a great army capable of

continental movement, France that must be the source of the will to fight and act as a magnet for the converging nationalist and guerilla forces. But is France really capable of assuming this crucial role?

For Americans to be able to weigh the answer to this question, they must realize that there is a considerable disparity of opinion between the U. S. and France on the importance of the East-West antagonism. A small number of French intellectuals (chiefly the group around the newspaper, *Figaro*) regard Russia as a formidable threat to France; the great majority of Frenchmen, even those who think realistically, cannot bring themselves to accept the fact emotionally. At best they can talk, with the common sense for which Frenchmen are famed, of the Russian menace, but without ever being genuinely frightened. Deep down, their peculiar history has conditioned them against such fear; traditionally, geographically and by all the laws of psychology, they are still able to react emotionally only to one nation as their natural enemy, no matter what the actual circumstances.

GERMANY MAY be cut in half, stripped and supervised, but it is close at hand. The names of the German leaders, cities and factions are household words in France. Fear of Germany and antagonism toward Germany are still prevailing emo-

tions, instilled in the schools and fixed in the minds of Frenchmen by a century of battles, by grenades and bombs, by the arrogant and brutal behavior of the Nazi occupation forces. The USSR looms as a far-off, exotic power, scarcely belonging in the French orbit. Russia has never, in history, waged an aggressive war against France and, indeed, during the last century, has been France's ally in two Franco-German wars. The French think traditionally: the notion that the Russians are really capable of robbing them of their cherished independence is as easy to implant as it would be to convince them to substitute Coca Cola for their native wines.

Above all, France refuses to believe that "Stalin means war" because the nation as a whole does not want to believe it. The acceptance of Russia as a threat to France's national existence would necessitate a strenuous, not to say, revolutionary, internal readjustment. France, as Mr. Sartre has remarked, looks very differently upon Communists than the United States. In America, a Communist is about as common as a gangster, and looked upon by citizens of normal political convictions with much the same emotions. In France, Communism is merely another variety of the numerous political ideologies that compete for public support. One out of every four or five Frenchmen has been a Com-

munist or a sympathizer during recent years. It is difficult to visualize one's neighbor as a future overseer and tyrant. Which is one reason, among others, why, at international conferences the French foreign ministers seem to regard their colleagues with an air of skeptical superiority. They consent to the common policy, accept American supplies and promise a bigger and better French army. Then they return home to slacken the pace of the rearmament and lighten the economic burdens of preparedness. Why all the haste and anxiety? they think and ask. Stalin — they are amazingly sure of it — will never move his armies into Europe.

Nothing is more indicative of the temper of France than the status of the rearmament program and the condition of the army. As to the former, a simple figure may give some idea of the leisurely tempo. Recently General Gueston, on behalf of the Finance Commission, informed the French parliament that the military expenses of France amounted to 6 or 7 per cent of the national income. Britain's military budget amounts to 15 per cent of her national income while in these United States the figure is 23.6. In June, 1951, an anonymous general, writing in *Le Monde*, asserted that the French army contained five allegedly complete divisions, of which only two were available in France. The complement of these

two is short by 30 per cent of the commissioned officers and 50 per cent of the non-coms. The same expert went on to give a picture of the overall condition of the French forces: "The French Army," he wrote, is not one, but many . . . the army is composed of a number of wrangling cliques each of which is encouraged by its own leader who intervenes with the minister in favor of his own men. Neither the interests of the country nor the army are allowed to interfere. The minister in turn finds himself the focus of sharp conflicts in which the victory goes to the man with the most stars on his sleeves or with the backing of the most powerful political party. As a result the French army is now divided into the [General] Juin army, the "Koenig" army, the "Giraud" army, the "Leclerc" army, the army of the F.F.L., the F.F.I., the F.F.C., the O.R.A., and an unlisted number of petty factions and divisions. . . . The spirit of intrigue is rife everywhere . . . the staff is infected with self-seeking, mutual distrust. In all its history, the French army has never known such disorganization."

In all, this is scarcely a picture to instill confidence in those who hope for a force capable of resisting a Russian invasion. A much less demoralized, superior French army which suffered from the same lesions disintegrated with surprising rapidity in the face of the Nazi

onslaught. The headway of the Communist virus in France in general and the army in particular is certainly as great as it was in 1940. Every third or fourth French soldier is a son of Communist-voting parents: at least 5 per cent of the army, it is estimated, are card-carrying party members. And no other Soviet-minded party has sworn as repeatedly and emphatically as the French Communists to refuse to bear arms against the Soviet government.

This state of affairs does not go unnoticed in France. Indignant speeches reverberate in the Chamber of Deputies, the situation is skillfully dissected in brilliant newspaper articles, the leaders of France scold, warn and threaten. But not a single concrete step is taken against the powerful French Communist party which blithely and vociferously continues to advocate mass treason. What hope can there be of effective resistance to the outward danger in a country which cannot cope effectively with the internal threat? How much is an army worth that is honeycombed with the agents and informers of the potential enemy, an army so uncertain of its loyalties that it may deliberate and discuss the issues before it decides to move against the attackers? And this is the mainstay of the Atlantic Alliance, the continental land force upon which the wealth and hopes of the free world are lavished!

Of course, it may be argued, France, with its great military tradition, can take stern measures to raise the discipline of the army, unify the command and purge the traitors. Means can also be found to put an end to the insubordinate behavior of one political party. This could be done, but only if the great majority of the nation regarded such action as necessary and urgent. The lack of significant action in this direction is, however, the result not of inadequate energy but a fundamental lack of conviction. The average Frenchman is not convinced that the hypocritical "peace-with-Russia" slogan proclaimed by the Communists is far-fetched or meaningless. Why should anyone, therefore, initiate a purge of the army and take drastic measures, when they may prove, in the long run, to be unnecessary?

There is, however, one political party in France, the R.P.F. of Charles de Gaulle, which has advocated stern measures against the Communists and does clamor for army reform. It would, however, be a mistake to pin great hopes on the chance of De Gaulle's advent to power. His fervent insistence on French superiority and preeminence in European affairs would be bound to provoke sharp conflicts between France and Great Britain and the U.S.A. It would also aggravate existing tensions between France and Germany. And whether the

attitude of Frenchmen toward Moscow would be seriously altered under a De Gaulle regime, is, at least, doubtful.

If the French army is central to the present plan for a European fighting force, it is equally true that any successful revisions of that plan must be centered in restoring to the use of the West the industrial and fighting potential of Germany. For unless the attitude of the French people can be changed in the near future, we must rely primarily on German strength. The French stand on German rearmament is not only the expression of a popular sentiment but also of a fixed policy. In France, Nazi Germany's re-emergence as a military power in the Thirties is usually ascribed not to the weakness and indecision of the French but to the innate barbarism of Germany. The inevitable inference is that Germany must never again be allowed to rebuild its army, even in the face of a new common danger. In this respect alone, the weak, wavering post-war French governments have been consistent and firm. Despite the insistence of Washington on the rapid creation of a German military force, nothing along these lines has been accomplished, and it seems that nothing is going to be done for quite a while.

At first, Paris openly opposed all projects for the rehabilitation of the German army. Up to the Korean war, it met little resistance because

policymakers in Washington and London were divided, because democracies are slow to make major decisions and because Julius Moch, the French Socialist Minister of War and the most stubborn of all advocates of a permanently weakened Germany, enjoyed great influence in the British Labor government and among some American "liberals." Open French opposition became untenable when the new Soviet-inspired drive in the Far East seemed likely to herald a fresh wave of Russian aggression. In September 1950, France finally gave in. A Washington conference of foreign ministers decided that a new German military force should be organized as quickly as possible.

Since then, French tactics have been different. Without opposing German rearmament in principle, everything possible was done to prevent it in actuality. German military units were desirable — so went the changed official French line — but without a German General Staff. The units, moreover, must be small — five or six thousand men at most and never to reach the size of a division. And they must all be integrated into a greater European army as subordinate parts. Moreover, as a prerequisite to even this restricted development, the German nation must first manifest a "new spirit" — translated into unofficial language, acceptance of the Schuman economic plan!

FRANCE WAS marking time. London, too, was hesitant. Moscow, however, was quick to turn disunity in the West to its own advantage and proposed, as usual, a conference of foreign ministers. The conference was naturally a dud, but almost half of 1951 was lost through Soviet maneuvering. There was then a succession of Big Three conferences which likewise bore no fruits but solemn official announcements assuring the world that great progress would be made by virtue of the unanimous decisions reached by the great powers. At which point, the French press would begin to harass its ministers with sharp-edged inquiries. The government would then unctuously reply that no definite commitments have been made, that the utmost caution would be exercised, deliberative committees set up and a new conference convoked before any action on German rearmament was initiated. Procrastination on this crucial issue has since followed the original pattern.

The rearmament of Germany nevertheless remains the key to the defense of Europe. It is certain that, if Germany were given the means, it is the one European nation that could put up a fight in case of a new conflagration. The difference between French reluctance and German willingness, moreover, cannot be explained by referring to national traits, by contrasting the "youthful dynamism" or "innate

militarism" of the Germans with the tired pacifism of the French. Every nation, or rather, every people, is weary today. Germany, still suffering from the devastation of the last war, would be even more unwilling than France to take up arms if war was not already a reality in the German theatre. Unlike France, Germany cannot reemerge as a political and economic unit without, at least, creating an armed force and, probably, without an East-West war.

The difference between the nations is due to the fact that France is satisfied with the status quo and anxious to retain it. Its frontiers are all that can be asked for, it has a new slice of land in the Saar and a territory to occupy in Western Austro-Germany. The French economy is almost rehabilitated, the standard of living almost at the pre-war level and unemployment at a minimum. War destruction was small and France is busy rebuilding and building afresh. The fact that Europe is divided in two and that Soviet troops are bivouacked on the Elbe, though slightly disturbing, is not without its bright side. Western Germany alone has a population of 46,000,000 against 41,000,000 French citizens. It would not make Frenchmen sleep easier if the 18,000,000 Germans in the Soviet zone were reunited with their brethren!

The opposite condition naturally prevails in Germany. The Germans

are no less inclined towards conservatism than their neighbors across the Rhine. They, too, would be glad to achieve a stable peace and gratified if the dispute with world Communism could be settled without great loss. The desires and fears of Germany can easily be gauged by the increasing number of "reinsurers" in the Western zone. A "reinsurer" is the name given to those non-Communists who take steps to earn the goodwill of the Communists in case of a sudden change in the political weather. Their number includes businessmen who make donations to the C.P. treasury, state officials who have private conferences with C.P. officials, subscribers to "front" newspapers and all those who, contrary to their inclinations, curry favor with the Communists by one method or another. The abundance of reinsurers is a conspicuous symptom of the low state of post-war German morals. In this respect, the state of affairs in the two larger powers in Western Europe are alarmingly similar.

But the French dream of peaceful "coexistence" with the Soviet Union scarcely exists in Germany except in the consciousness of a few very old or unusually crooked politicians. The Bonn government is not recognized by Moscow or its satellites and no diplomatic or consular agents of the Soviet Union are to be found in Western Germany. Konrad Adenauer's war with the Eastern German

government, that of Wilhelm Pieck, continues without a break, now quietly and now breaking loudly into public notice. Every week hundreds of "East Germans" escape across the green frontier into the Western zone. Westerners are kidnapped and disappear into Soviet-controlled territory. Hundreds of Russian agents roam West Germany, spying on occupation forces as well as on their own compatriots, breeding fear and dissatisfaction. Bribery, of every kind, infects the body politic and spreads, meeting no resistance. Germans are, in short, not in a position to be lulled by false optimism. Conservatism, passivity and tranquility cannot exist in this ravaged, disoriented country where everyone senses that they are living in a period of transition, a chaotic era in which all Germans anticipate serious conflicts and upheavals and realize that they may be in the center of an impending hurricane.

American foreign policy moves slowly because it depends on public opinion and the complex processes of democracy. In a war against Nazi Germany, it was only natural that France should assume the status of a leader. After the war, this status was perpetuated as France became a leader of the Big Four, over, it may be remembered, Stalin's harshly realistic objection that, in terms of military prowess, the position was unwarranted. In the glow of victory and the fever of demobilization, it

was natural to overlook such matters as fighting divisions, bombers and tanks in considering the status of our French allies. The present rift between the West and the Soviet Union necessitates, however, the creation of a new coalition, with its center nearer the frontier between East and West. The success of such a coalition will naturally depend, in large measure, on its ability to utilize the industrial and military potential of the nation that has been so badly mauled by the Kremlin.

THE BELIEF that Europe can be effectively rearmed without the reintegration of Germany into the West, can, at this date, only be characterized as a species of delusion. It is likewise dangerously wishful thinking to believe that the disparity between the two armed camps of the world has decreased as a result of the formation of the Atlantic Pact organization. No doubt, the rearmament of the free world has been progressing but the unfree world has not been exactly idle either. It is extremely doubtful whether the technical superiority of the West — if it still exists — is enough to offset the crushing numerical superiority of the East. At present, the Soviet Union keeps four classes, those of

1927 to 1930, under arms, which constitute a total of about 4,000,000 men. In Eastern Germany, alone, thirty divisions are stationed. Over 170 divisions remain in Russia, mostly concentrated near the frontier. In addition, the five Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe maintain an aggregate armed force, conservatively estimated at 800,000.

Against this unprecedented peacetime military roster, the standing armed forces of the West seem comparatively puny. Twenty divisions, primarily designated for local action, are scattered over the continent. Ten more divisions (six U. S. and four British) are stationed in Germany today. Finally, the army of General Eisenhower is expected to have twenty divisions available by 1953. Even taking into account the highest estimates of future Western potential, the gap is and will remain enormous unless an additional source of military power is found in the West.

Will Europe fight? Disoriented, hesitant, uncertain of its role and power, Europe can only offer a token resistance to any invasion. The free nations of the continent will fight badly, if at all, unless drastic changes in present plans and policies are carried out.

ERRATUM: In David Dallin's "The Foreign Policy of American Labor," (October), the author stated erroneously that Irving Brown, A. F. of L. representative in Europe, had been a Communist "for a short time." Mr. Brown has in fact never been a party member nor a Communist sympathizer.

*to newsmen
it was a circus
but to the
participants
it was simply*

A Point of Honor

ROBERT A. KNOWLTON

THE OPERATION WAS NOT a success from the news viewpoint. In the first place, though the alley on the cell-block side was filled with Cadillac convertibles and gesticulating Latins, not a single name (except the girls', of course, and they were pitifully unimaginative creations) was entered on the blotter. Then again, every city editor in Washington sat on the story, ordering the legmen to lay off the biggest jail delivery in the District of Columbia's history. But nobody could get too angry about it. As one of the younger reporters for the City News ticker inaccurately explained, "It's sort of fun, being in on something like this, even if you can't write it. Kind of a local Mayerling." He blushed when he said this.

Perhaps because it was an otherwise dull weekend, the story of the Operation grew to the stature of a Washington legend with astounding

rapidity. Within forty-eight hours it had been retold with so many improbable embellishments that it lost all credibility in the transformation. By Monday morning, the very persons who participated could safely brand it as a malicious and quite unfunny lie. Yet it did occur, and the spark which touched off the charge was a simple point of honor.

IT BEGAN ON Friday afternoon when Leonardo Salazár, First Secretary of the Argentine Embassy, developed a headache. He checked and learned that his Ambassador had gone to the races at Laurel. There was nothing to keep him at his desk. A short nap, he felt, was exactly what he needed.

Back in his apartment he swallowed two aspirins with three fingers of scotch as a chaser, mixed a sizable highball, and lay back on his satin bedspread to wait. When

the more urgent part of the pain had left him, he would plan his evening. Meanwhile he would relax and ponder the inevitable defloration of his new stenographer, a Puerto Rican girl named Alicia.

He couldn't sleep, as it turned out, but the headache gradually quieted. He thought of the evening, and also of the weekend stretching before him, unplanned, without appointments, blank.

He considered calling his colleague Chanco González, and cadging a few drinks, but decided against it. Chanco already suspected an affair with the stenographer, and would try to pump him for details. He thought of Dorteanu the Rumanian, who owed him a dinner, but the thought was unexciting. By a logical progression he was led to his last resort, a prospect he had been holding in reserve in the back of his mind all the time. He would phone Lily's to make sure his favorite girls were there, have an early supper at the Mayflower, buy a bottle of bourbon, and spend a few quiet hours in amusing company.

Sergeant Pinky Weingartner of the vice squad, for reasons of prudence, also chose the early evening for a somewhat more formal call at Lily's. He had known of the establishment's existence, of course, throughout the two years it had been in business. He knew a good deal more than that, too: he knew how many cars with DPL tags were

to be found parked in that particular block of Connecticut Avenue on an average Saturday night in May, and which Chargé d'Affaires had rented (and left vacant) the apartment below Lily's to obviate matrimonial complaints. But the trouble was that there *had* been complaints; not even the Chargé, who earned a tidy stake before the war selling visas, could rent the apartments above and on either side of Lily's.

Sergeant Weingartner was an honest man: he was not in on the take from Lily's or from any other emporium. He was also a man with thoroughly sound ideas about *laissez-faire* and the saddening effects of repression. So long as what he always referred to as "a place" kept its merriment within bounds and refrained from annoying the unsympathetic, he let it alone. But the murmurings about Lily's had become increasingly frequent during the past month, and had reached a loud climax two nights before, following the bachelor dinner of a Middle Eastern Cultural Attaché. Weingartner was annoyed, but did not forget the possible implications of confronting a half-dozen diplomats during their relaxation. Therefore he picked the hour of dinner for his visit: to raid Lily's in an off moment.

Motivated by a similar sense of circumspection, Salazár had left his identifying papers in his wall cabinet at home. When Weingartner's men quietly pushed by the frightened

maid and entered the drawing-room, he was in his underwear chinning himself on the lintel, to the girls' admiring exclamations. At that, he would have been released if he had offered an alias and quietly put on his clothes. Weingartner was not after the clients. But Gloria, the doll-like brunette, spat in an arresting officer's face, the officer rudely shoved her against the wall, Gloria burst into tears, and Leonardo, his chivalric anger surfacing, demanded satisfaction from the patrolman. The lady, he pointed out, was under his protection, and no milk-curdling fatherless vicuña was going to molest her. He was thereupon allotted thirty seconds to make himself presentable for the ride to headquarters. Belatedly he claimed diplomatic immunity, but being unable to prove his right to that privilege, was hustled downstairs and into the squad car, an importunate official hand on each shoulder. The sorrowing Weingartner herded the girls to the wagon. He had a feeling there would be trouble over this.

THE TROUBLE DEVELOPED, however, along rather different lines than he expected. In the lobby of the headquarters building, Leonardo, his handkerchief hiding his face, was permitted, even encouraged, to use the phone. He dialed Chanco.

"Aló," he shouted when he got an answer at last. "Chanco? Chanco! This is León."

"Ah, Leonardo." Chanco was solicitous. "The headache, it improves?"

"No. Chanco, listen carefully. I am in jail."

"For what, boy? Did the police find the Charvet necktie indecent? I warned you, Leonardo, in the United States they are strict about such matters."

"No, Chanco. My God, I'm serious. I'm in jail. I'm at police headquarters."

"Now don't be boring." Chanco sounded impatient. "Is that what you called me for, to make stupid remarks about jails? How can you be in jail? You're a diplomat."

"Chanco, listen, please listen. I was at Lily's."

"With a headache? Dear boy, at your age you should take care. It would not be nice to die of an embolus. What would we tell the chief?"

Leonardo was close to tears. He thought fleetingly that not one of his friends would believe him, that he would sit in a dark and fetid cell until he was missed at the Chancery. It might be weeks. He spoke slowly.

"Listen carefully, my Chanco."

Robert A. Knowlton has divided a good portion of his thirty-seven years almost equally between the United Press and the United States Navy. He is currently devoting his chief daytime efforts to the Navy, at a desk in Washington, D. C., rank Lieutenant Commander. He is married, has one child, is now doing his writing "on the side."

Don't interrupt. I was at Lily's, alone, and the police came. I had left my papers at home. There was a slight *contretemps*, and I was escorted to jail. Until I can demonstrate that I am truthfully Leonardo Salazár, I remain in prison." His emotion beyond control, he added, "In a dungeon, Chancho, with the cutthroats, the thieves, the political criminals."

Immediately Chancho's tone changed. It became heavy with concern. "My poor old colleague, what a barbarity! Are you permitted visitors? Ah, your friends will be distressed, León. They will wish to come with little gifts, with cigarettes and cologne."

Leonardo glanced at Weingartner standing impassively in the corridor. With his free hand, he grabbed the mouthpiece desperately. "Only you can help, Chancho," he screamed. "You must come at once and tell them who I am. Do you want me to be sent to prison with the girls?"

"The girls?" Chancho seemed surprised. "Are the girls in jail too?"

"Yes, yes. Hurry, Chancho."

"Rose? Gloria?"

"Chancho, for God's sake!"

"And little Ruth? León, this is serious."

"Angels in heaven! Holy San Martín!"

"Leonardo, listen to me. This takes thought, León, and planning. Stay where you are and observe the girls. See that they come to no harm.

I will call Jaime, I will call Brateanu, I will call Luray of the Pan American Union and Edgeworth of the State Department, and young Irrarázegui and Geroes. We will need money. The police undoubtedly expect fines to be paid. Wait, León, and be courageous. We come to your aid."

IT WAS EASILY an hour before the first Cadillac pulled up in the concrete driveway, its horn sounding a reassuring tattoo. Three more Cadillacs in succession careened onto the asphalt, followed by a Buick, two Packards, another Cadillac and an old Chevrolet. The driver of the last of these was the only one who did not rush to join the growing and increasingly agitated group on the steps. This was Edgeworth, and he wanted no part of the whole miserable business. It would certainly look dandy, he thought, for a desk man in the Division of American Republics to be standing bail for a bunch of crummy whores. On the other hand, he had no intention of losing his privileged status as a member of Lily's club, and his absence, or failure to make his ante, might be misinterpreted.

While Edgeworth dawdled in the driveway and cautiously greeted new arrivals, the club members named Luray of the Pan American Union their spokesman. As Geroes pointed out, Luray was the logical choice: he enjoyed quasi-diplomatic standing, had lived in Washington

for eighteen years, and had himself almost been jailed on a bad-check charge. If anyone knew the proper blandishments, he was the man. They handed over their stake money, and with Edgeworth discreetly trailing, marched down the corridor to the Captain's office.

Weingartner unobtrusively preceded them. He was standing at the corner of Captain Brockhurst's desk by the time the visitors nudged their elected representative forward. Luray made a brave beginning.

"Sir," he announced resonantly, "you have here certain women."

"Could be," agreed the captain. "What women you talking about?"

"Certain women who, because of some perfectly understandable mistake, were arrested tonight and transported to this building."

"Sorry, but you'll have to be more explicit," the captain apologized. "Where were they arrested? What charge?"

"In an apartment house on Connecticut Avenue, sir. Above Rock Creek Park. I do not know the charge, but possibly it might be, ah, loitering." He turned and smiled triumphantly at his friends.

Weingartner whispered in the captain's ear. Without appearing to listen, Brockhurst nodded. "We got a bunch of prostitutes tonight," he said. "Disorderly house."

"Prostitutes? Ah no, sir. Those are our maids." Luray looked hurt.

"Your maids?" It was Weingart-

ner, startled.

"Yes sir. You see, it is a difficult situation. We are diplomats. Most of us, you will understand, are bachelors." Luray was getting warmed up, and his confidence grew. "Naturally we cannot have our maids living in the same premises with us. It would cause talk."

"Naturally," Brockhurst assented.

"Lacking the means to provide separate accommodations for each, we joined our purses to obtain an apartment large enough for them all. Obviously, then, the officers who arrested these women acted under an entirely erroneous impression." He took a deep breath.

"I see," said Brockhurst. "Got a rent receipt?"

"I beg your pardon?"

"Rent receipt. The person you paid the rent to must have given you a receipt."

"We pay by check."

"Not yours, I hope," the captain said amiably. "How've you been, Mr. Luray?"

Only slightly shaken, Luray replied. "Very well, thank you. And now you will release the maids in our custody?"

"I'd like to," sighed Brockhurst. "This has been one of the finest discussions I can remember. But there are certain difficulties. For example, several tenants in that apartment house kicked about the noise—music and such—late at night, particularly on weekends. I realize

your maids are young and high-spirited, but a nuisance is a nuisance."

"There shall be no noise," Luray promised.

"One more thing," the captain continued. "They've already been booked, so we can't just turn 'em loose. The usual collateral is fifty dollars apiece. Except for the madam. I beg your pardon, the housekeeper. She costs a hundred and fifty. Still want them?"

"How many are there?"

"Five, all told. Three hundred and fifty dollars."

Luray counted the bills onto the desk. They made quite a pile.

"They're due in court Monday," said Brockhurst, "but I assume you'll want to forfeit? Good maids are hard to get."

"Our official duties are quite onerous," Luray explained. "Especially on Mondays. I really doubt whether the pressure of work, coming at this season . . ."

"Okay, okay, just a routine question. If you gentlemen'll wait in the hall a few minutes, I'll have the young ladies sent out and you can take 'em away."

"Unfortunately we are in a great hurry," said Luray suavely. He placed a dollar on Brockhurst's desk. "If, however, you would do us the further kindness of pointing out to them the correct bus, we should be most grateful."

"Well, I'll be goddamned," said Brockhurst.

As they started to the door, young Irrarázegui spoke for the first time.

"Luray," he called. "You have forgotten."

"Later, *jóven*, later. The thing now is to depart with speed."

THEY WERE WALKING fast by then, and had reached the first turn in the corridor when a flash bulb stopped them.

"My God," Luray said. "Cover your faces, everyone."

Five men blocked the way, four of them young, one old and beery. At least two held pencils and copy paper.

"Like to have your names," a youth said affably. "You bailed the bunch Weingartner brought in?"

"Please," Luray held up a hand. "I do not understand."

"Those girls Weingartner got in a Conn. Ave raid," the young man explained. "The word is you guys are going bail."

"Ah no," said Luray with his most charming smile. "You are quite mistaken. We are with the United Nations. A subcommittee investigating the traffic in women and children — part of the Committee on Human Rights — Economic and Social Council, you know. Our studies occasionally bring us to Washington where, I am happy to say, great strides are being made in the elimination of that noxious commerce under the courageous leadership of Colonel Brockhurst and

Major Weingartner. The strides, I mean." He coughed delicately. "You may quote me. My name is Luís López. But please, absolutely no pictures. Good night."

"How about the guy picked up with them? The guy in the front office. He one of you boys too?"

"Luray," said Irrarázegui excitedly, "I've been trying to tell you."

Luray kicked backward at Irrarázegui's shin. "There was no one with us," he stated. "And now, once again, good night." They made the door at a half-run.

Outside on the steps, Luray turned to Irrarázegui fiercely. "Idiot," he whispered. "We can't afford to wait there. The girls may come out any moment." He raised his voice dramatically. "To your automobiles! We meet at my apartment." Once more whispering urgently, he took the young man by the arm. "Listen, Paco. The girls don't know you. If they see you, there's no harm done. Go to that front room, there to the right of the entrance, and identify Salazár. Bring him in a taxi to my apartment. He will need a drink. Go now." He ran down the steps.

Releasing Salazár was no trick at all. Weingartner had left instructions that the slightest evidence of diplomatic standing was to be accepted, and the desk corporal barely glanced at Irrarázegui's card. Riding up New York Avenue in the taxi,

it was some time before Paco could find the absolutely correct words to phrase his embarrassment and sorrow at their collective selfishness.

"Leonardo," he said finally, "this was truly a *vergüenza*. I am ashamed of how we acted."

Salazár stopped combing his hair and looked at him in astonishment. "Ashamed? Of what?"

"We behaved badly, León. We allowed you to suffer. We concentrated our efforts on releasing the girls."

"Naturally," said Salazár. "What else would you do?"

"You are not angry, León?"

"Angry? Listen, Paco. To the girls I am now a hero. They will welcome me to their arms. They will coax me with delicate little devices. They will say to themselves, when entertaining another caller, 'I must save my passion for Valentino.' They always call me Valentino. They will say, 'Valentino has defied the authorities for us, he has shown himself to be a man.' Besides, Paco, think of this. I shall not be expected to share the expense of their release. It will not cost me a penny."

They turned into the Park, and Salazár breathed the damp air appreciatively. "I think I will not stay long at the home of Luray, Paco. I believe Gloria may wish to see me, to express her appreciation.

"And, you know," he added in a self-satisfied manner, "my headache has completely disappeared."

• LETTER FROM LONDON •

THE REVOLUTION IN BRITISH READING

Angus Wilson

LONDON — An English reader to-day accepts an American setting as the background of his weekly books from the local library almost as easily as he does an American setting in his weekly film at the local cinema. That is a slight exaggeration, but no more. It represents a revolution in our current reading.

There were, of course, widely read American authors in England in the Twenties and Thirties, but these were the giants — Dreiser, Sinclair Lewis, Faulkner, Hemingway. American books, too, by lesser known authors were often well received, but they were regarded primarily as interesting works from abroad, then ranked with translations from the French or the German. That is no longer so. We still have a market for French or Italian or Scandinavian translations and films, but American books are no longer in this class. They are “books” just like any other English books, just as American films are “films.” I do not want to suggest that this implies any greater identification between the two countries,

but it does suggest the breakdown of certain barriers of prejudice in this country through the force of events.

Much of this conditioning of the English reading palate to American fare is clearly the result of publishers' agreements, which themselves spring from wider financial causes, but I do not think that such a change of diet would have had such immediate success here unless we had already undergone some softening up process or a change of heart, depending on how you like to look at it. Such a revolution in a country like England, which is coy about mentioning its habits let alone changing them, is worth investigation, particularly at so vital a juncture in Anglo-American relations.

TO UNDERSTAND what has happened, one must first know something of the makeup of the English reading public — particularly the fiction-reading public, for it is American fiction, above all, that is now the somewhat strident cuckoo

in the rather exclusive English nests. It is also necessary to have tasted the home fare that is provided for English readers by English writers, for, like American food parcels, American fiction would not perhaps be quite so easily swallowed by proud English stomachs, but for the deficiencies in the home diet.

The middle-classes — who form the core of fiction readers — have lost the position they had, and, whatever changes of governments there may be, all but the most foolish of them know that they will never have it again. A large percentage of the older members live largely on the past or on unsatisfactory dreams of a return to the old days or on grumbling. But the more intelligent of the middle-aged and the greater part of the younger middle-classes are committed to life as it is now. They are seeking, without offending too openly the class susceptibilities of their elders, to adapt themselves to it. In the immediate postwar years, this was not so. Younger middle class people at that time — ex-officers and their wives, young professional men, and so on — either thought they had a place in the new Labour Utopia, or they sought to preserve their old Utopia as Herrenvolk in the German Control Commission, or they just sat back and grumbled with their elders. Six years have passed, and none of those little foxholes is any longer tenable. The Utopias have vanished, one and

all, and you can't sit back and wait for death unless you're awfully old or awfully stupid. Increasingly then the English middle classes — the English readers of fiction — are committed to life. English fiction, however, is not.

The great key theme of English fiction since the War has been nostalgia. Deep sensitivity to the atmosphere of places and shades in personal relationships, careful evocation by image, sound and color of the scenes of childhood, these are the hallmarks of the best English post-war novels. The ancestry of the school is an old and honourable one — Henry James, Proust, E. M. Forster, Virginia Woolf are its teachers — and many of the disciples, notably Elizabeth Bowen, have produced and may still produce far better work than any coming out of modern America.

It is, nevertheless, a school of death, nostalgic, wistful, even at its most loving only expressing the sort of courage with which the aristocrats faced the inevitable guillotine. It has a lighter, gayer sister school, that of Nancy Mitford and Angela Thirkell, who attempt to reconstruct the same scene with some of the childhood laughter that rang through the nursery in the old Hall in those far-off days, but even this laughter comes to us a little hysterically through tears. Some English writers, it is true, still have their eyes on the contemporary scene, the living

world, but their vision is not a new one, it is a vision heavy with hang-over from the Thirties, steadily getting more blurred and cock-eyed from this now unduly prolonged "Long Week End." The guilt that writers felt about society in the 1930's still permeates the works of Graham Greene and Jocelyn Brooke, their novels are still crowded with its Kafka-inherited symbols. They offer as redemption the discipline of the Catholic Church or the ranks of the regular Army. Neither suggests that such means of redemption will bring much relief. Evelyn Waugh gives a few more sharp thrusts into the festering wounds of the old ruling classes just to remind them that the nostalgic pleasure they have got from Miss Bowen or Miss Mitford is only a dream. My own work, I suppose, follows in his wake. But reading about one's own guilt or enjoying one's own dissection is, after all, only the reverse of soaking in nostalgic daydreams — a drier wine, perhaps, for more discriminating palates.

The best "younger" writers — most of them over forty — have given up any attempt to relate their work to the wider world, past or present, of their readers. Henry Green, William Sansom, P. H. Newby are openly committed to the pursuit of their art as a form and purposely limit the content of their work to the thinnest possible skeleton round which to weave their care-

ful, meticulous sentences. The last novel of Nigel Balchin suggests that he, too — formerly one of our writers most immersed in contemporary life — has decided to follow the path of pure form.

I do not want to suggest that contemporary English writing is bad. Many of the novelists I have named could give most of the American writers whose work I shall discuss a very good start and still win comfortably. But the content of their work is not diet for those who are intent on living, it is at best a diet for those who do not want public announcement of their deaths.

THE BEST AMERICAN novels, it seems to me, are not like that. Their content is often bitter, nearly always complaining, sometimes despairing, but the spirit which infuses it, though often naive, is youthful, alive and looking to the future. Even those who apparently despair seem paradoxically to accept their despair as part of a world which will continue.

This was not, perhaps, true of the

Angus Wilson, whose short stories have been published in two collections, The Wrong Set and Such Darling Dodos, is one of Britain's most highly esteemed younger writers. He is at work now on a book about Emile Zola and a novel of contemporary English social life.

work of the Southern "decadent" school, notably of Truman Capote, but that would appear already to belong to the past. Those ornate, beautifully written, embarrassingly "elfin" works — *Other Voices, Other Rooms* and *A Tree of Night* — are not what is welcomed from America by the English reader in 1951. Their atmosphere of self-conscious beauty and culture, their "decadence" gave them a pseudo-European sophisticated air which, perhaps, helped in softening up English readers to their present total acceptance of American fiction. It should, too, never be forgotten that the snobbery of the English public in favour of the genteel legend of the Southern States of America dies very hard, and, as a filip to this snobbery, Mr. Capote and Miss Welty fulfilled the highest hopes.

That, however, is not the note of the popular American books of the last two years. The only novel to have considerable success this year which played up to that "civilized, cultured" demand was Frederick Buechner's *A Long Day's Dying*, which, apart from its brilliantly sustained pastiche of seventeenth century prose, was exactly the sort of slow, involved "song and dance about nothing" which the best "younger" English writers of today are producing. Nothing, on the other hand, could, I think, better illustrate the living content of the modern American novel than Ten-

nessee Williams' *Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone*. A bitter, sad little book about the relatively minor subject of a once beautiful woman's decline into fifth-rate sexual promiscuity; it is nevertheless informed with life from start to finish. Mrs. Stone is pursued relentlessly to the end of her downhill roll, but there is none of the savage, indulgent violence with which, for example, Evelyn Waugh cuts the wretched heroine of *The Loved One* into her squalid little bits. At the same time, though Williams treats Mrs. Stone with pity and humanity, we are not left for a moment to suppose that because Mrs. Stone goes down, we must ourselves go down in a wallow of self pity disguised as pity for mankind. A bitter commentary upon Roman or most continental social life of today is implicit in Williams' novel, but even the symbol of its corruption, Paolo the gigolo, is a completely living person, whose rapacity and vanity are not the wornout death wish but simple means to an easy life, and the author clearly suggests that we must take the society in which Paolo thrives as part of a world in which we shall have to live.

The striking contrast between *Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* and Ernest Hemingway's *Across the River and into the Trees* throws into relief this vital aspect of the work of the young American novelists, and suggests that some of the morbidity which attaches to English writing

today may not be solely a national malaise, but a slow death which is creeping upon the older generation of writers in the whole Western world. Hemingway's work was, on the whole, as ill received here as in America. I feel strongly myself that not enough has been said about the extremely high standard of the writing — a descriptive power and a concise, easy flowing narrative style still almost unequaled — which compelled my sympathy for the Colonel hero, a type of brutal, self-pitying, self-satisfied man whom I cordially detest in real life. Nevertheless, it is the force of Hemingway's writing which disguises the frustrated hatred of life and humanity that runs through the book, and not the sham facade of epicureanism, love of good food, or good talk and of duck-shooting by which he attempts to disguise his moribund hero as a full blooded he-man. Nor is this picture in any way assisted by the wornout whimsy of the Colonel's love passages with his young mistress. On the whole, if nostalgia is to be the note of our veteran novelists. I prefer the self-pity of England's upper middle class Mrs. Minivers to that of America's wornout Colonels.

Hemingway's work, however, seems merely an interesting survival among American novels today. The great contrast that they provide with our native product is in their concern with the problems of con-

temporary society. The key to this probably lies in the simple fact that young writers in the United States are genuinely young men. To strike a personal note which illustrates this difference — I was both surprised and embarrassed when, having written my first book at thirty-five, I found myself generally described as a young writer. I soon discovered how true it was, and, at thirty-eight, I can still safely call myself a young writer, younger by a number of years than most of the other "younger" writers, nearly all of whom are over forty.

Writing in England has been so generally attached to the education and traditions of a class, that with the decline of that class, the flow of writers seems simply to have ceased. It is, I am fairly sure, a temporary phase. If the younger generation cannot yet find self-expression or get their self-expression published, they can at any rate show a preference for literature by young writers from abroad who are concerned with the issues of modern life. It has been preeminently America, which has never been dominated by "class" in our indefinable, pervasive sense of the word, which has provided that literature.

ONE OF THE chief preoccupations of these postwar writers appears to be the problem of outcasts from society — imbeciles, pacifists, Jews in anti-Semitic communities,

homosexuals, juvenile delinquents. A literature concerned with such "problems" would seem, at first sight, likely to be simply a return to the old social realism of Galsworthy, Dreiser, Upton Sinclair and others, and, as such, it would invite the sneers of all the literary schools of the last thirty years.

In the first place I suspect that some elements of social realism must return to the novel if it is going to be reintegrated into modern life. But far more important is the different approach of these new writers. They are, of course, concerned with the misery, the tragedy of their outcast characters, as were Galsworthy and the old liberal writers; at times, the worst of them — and some of the worst of these young American novelists are as bad as is possible — are mawkish and emotionally vulgar. But, in the main, they are far more concerned with the effect that the existence of misfits and outcasts has upon society around them. It is not the individuals themselves for whom they bleed, but society itself. Can society, they ask, afford the waste of energy, the distortion of personality that goes into the prejudice, violence and hypocrisy which is aroused by the outcast in its midst? When they show concern for the outcasts themselves, it is not for the aberration, the unorthodoxy itself — the homosexuality, the conscientious objections to military service, the feeble-mindedness, the differ-

ence of race or color — these, they suggest, are facts whether we like them or not. What disturbs them is the further waste, the further aberration which proceeds from exile by society. I am not concerned with whether this approach is morally or socially correct, but wish to emphasize that it is a fresh approach to an old problem, that it is an approach which shows a dominating desire to accept the modern world as it is, and proceed with the process of living. It is an attitude which lies deep in the younger generation in England today, but of which there is no word in English fiction.

The quality and extent to which this attitude is expressed satisfactorily in these novels varies enormously. The two most successful have dealt with imbeciles — Max Steele's *Debby* and Leonard Kaufman's *Tender Mercy*. The quality of writing and the depth of perception in these two novels is quite outstanding. Fritz Peters' *Finisterre*, which has been very well received here, seems to me only second-rate. It is adequately written, but its picture of the homosexual world which it portrays seems both maiden-auntish and not, I suspect, wholly sincere. Jeb Stuart's *The Objector* is an honest, naive piece of work, but no more. *The Stranger in the Land* by Ward Thomas, another book on a homosexual theme, that has aroused interest here, strikes me as one of the worst written, most naive books I

have ever encountered. The standard of achievement, in fact, of these young writers is by no means commensurate with the freshness of their approach and their vitality. It would be untrue to suggest, however, that these defects necessarily limit their popularity with English readers or critics. If we are ready, indeed glad, to receive from America novels that we find wanting in our own country, the pill of acknowledging a further debt to the United States is somewhat gilded by the superiority with which we may note the lack of artistry and polish in the writing, and the crudeness with which many of the ideas are presented. It helps to confirm us in our favorite double-edged compliment of paying tribute to the American heart rather than to the American head.

THERE HAVE BEEN, however, two novels from the United States in postwar years which in their scope and treatment go much beyond anything that has been attempted here. Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* and Lionel Trilling's *Middle of the Journey* have been almost universally acclaimed in England. They are, perhaps, the only recent novels which have attempted to deal with human reaction to the World War and the Cold War from anything more than a limited, particularized aspect.

It is difficult to say anything more about *The Naked and the Dead* than

has already been said. Critical reaction to it in this country was somewhat sidetracked by irrelevant journalistic flapping about its "outspokenness" and the equally irrelevant, naive "discovery" by the critics that coarse language may appear in sincere and serious work. The whole controversy was a healthy reminder of how little we have grown up since the newspaper puritanism of the days of D. H. Lawrence and Joyce. *The Naked and the Dead* has inevitably some boredom, some bad, journalistic writing and some tired writing that could only be expected in so long a work by so young a man. I do not myself think that Dos Passos can successfully be imitated, and I find, as a result, that the flashbacks to the civilian lives of the characters were largely failures. It is nevertheless a remarkable achievement. There have been few such successful communications of "atmosphere" for many years; and in the characters of Hearn, Croft and Cummings three full size, significant portraits of the last war's fighting men. To say that it is probably not a book that will survive is not, I think, a belittlement of its achievement, for one of the most important elements in a healthy literary age is the creation of successful, imaginative records of contemporary life significant only to the age in which they are written.

Although *The Middle of the Journey* is presented in smaller terms — the reactions of a group of politically

mindful intellectuals — it is a book of altogether more general communication. Many critics here think that it is one of the few contemporary novels that has enough general significance to survive its own time. If I do not agree that is not because I think Trilling has not chosen his theme correctly, nor that he is unaware of what its implications are, but because I think that, as might be expected in so eminent an academic scholar, he is *too* aware of what he is attempting. The novel is almost too much of a thesis, and comes too directly from the head, to contain that force and power of unconscious emotion, which, I think, marks all really great novels. English critics have perhaps been too ready to rank it so highly, because influenced so obviously by E. M. Forster, and, I suspect, even more by D. H. Lawrence, it falls into the English tradition so easily. It is,

nevertheless, the only postwar novel which attempts to portray the ideological climate, which as Trilling himself says, in an essay on "Art and Fortune," has largely replaced the climate of class which underlay the great novels of the past.

This essay "Art and Fortune" is reprinted in Trilling's *The Liberal Imagination*, which is the only non-fictional work from America to make a strong impression here. The publication and editing of the Malahide Papers in the United States perhaps symbolizes the high esteem in which English students of literature hold American literary scholarship and criticism. We had come already before the War to look for our most creative criticism from Edmund Wilson. *The Liberal Imagination* no longer holds to Wilson's Freudian standpoints, but it represents the only serious attempt in recent years to go beyond it.

*This
is a time
for
understanding---*

Why a Republican Can't Be a Liberal

WILLIAM BRADFORD HUIE

WHAT THIS COUNTRY NEEDS is an intellectual revolt against Liberalism as it is now defined. We need more than a revolt; we need a national revulsion against the pretentiousness, the pomposity of the self-proclaimed Liberal.

For twenty years now Americans have cowered under "the craven fear of being thought illiberal." On college campuses not to be a Liberal has been more embarrassing than not knowing which spoon to use for your soup. On the hustings politicians have been more afraid of being called Conservative than of being called a bigamist. In books, magazines, on stage, and over radio, mentalities ranging from Einstein down to Frank Sinatra have preached that not to be Liberal was to risk offend-

ing like not using Mum or Listerine.

This country, truly, needs a freedom from fear: the fear of not being a Liberal.

There was a time in American history when to be a Liberal meant that one favored liberty — individual liberty and individual responsibility as against the restrictions of government and society. But today — for the past twenty years — to be an American Liberal has been to defend such positions as these:

1. *That there was and is something hopeful for mankind in Moscow.*

In 1933 one could be gay and hopeful and Liberal only by favoring recognition of the Soviet Union. In Washington an obscure lawyer named Dean Acheson worked diligently to bring this about. In his enthusiasm he almost literally ran errands for Maxim Litvinoff, the Russian emissary who was arranging the recognition. Acheson and his fellow Liberals, like Alger Hiss and Philip

This is the third in a series of excerpts from Mr. Huie's forthcoming book HOW TO BE A REPUBLICAN AND ENJOY IT. Additional excerpts will appear in subsequent issues. The book will be published April 1, 1952, by Duell, Sloan & Pearce.

Jessup, why were they so enthusiastic over Soviet recognition? Acheson and Jessup probably were not Communists; they were just Liberals — great Liberals — and they were convinced that Soviet recognition would be a boon to the Russian people and to the cause of mankind.

Let any American who wants to understand Liberalism — and how we have suffered from its follies — let him go back and read what the Liberals were writing about Stalin and about life in Russia in 1933.

In 1933 I was twenty-two years old, a Phi Beta Kappa, an intellectual, a student of Russian literature, and a supporter of the New Deal. Yet when I published an article opposing recognition of Soviet Russia I was accused by Liberals of being a reactionary at best, and probably a Fascist.

My article now reads like a 1951-model speech by Acheson or Jessup. It took them seventeen years to understand the nature of the Soviet regime; and during these seventeen years they and their fellow Liberals managed to lose, for free men, the opportunities of the Second World War, and they managed to deliver most of both Europe and Asia into the clutches of the Soviet regime which they so long regarded so hopefully.

In 1946, speaking in a large public auditorium in Brooklyn, I made this remark: "The great Liberals in our State Department tell us that there

is something hopeful in the movement of the Chinese Reds. During the war our own troops were furnished pamphlets describing the Reds as democrats, and likening the Red leader, Mao Tze-tung, to Thomas Jefferson. For myself I take a different view. I believe the Chinese Reds are tyrants, and if they are allowed to have their way in China they will set back Asia two hundred years, and they will cost us the lives of young men within the sound of my voice."

That remark almost precipitated a riot among the Liberals of Brooklyn.

Americans calling themselves Liberals have been the unwitting servants of tyranny in our time. It was American Liberals who expressed their friendship for the Russian people by helping the Soviet dictatorship establish itself more securely. It was American Liberals who were convinced that if only we'd make enough concessions to Stalin and quit irritating him, then he'd relax into a kindly and cooperative old democrat. And it was American Liberals who helped deliver the free men of Czechoslovakia and Poland and China to the torture chambers and work camps of Communism.

Does this recommend Liberalism to the thoughtful American of 1951?

In the pivotal elections of 1952 — the elections which will determine whether this country, too, is to become a one-party state — we should divide on this line: On the one side

should be the Liberals, of North and South — all those Americans who, like Dean Acheson and Philip Jessup and Alger Hiss, advocated the recognition of Soviet Russia, and who, even as late as 1949, were regarding the Chinese Reds as hopeful.

On the other side should be the Conservatives, of North and South — all those Americans who distrusted the Soviet regime in 1933 and who, even as early as 1946, recognized the Chinese Reds as tyrants.

If we Conservatives win, then we can return Mr. Acheson and Mr. Jessup to private life and replace them with Americans whose judgment has proved somewhat more trustworthy.

2. *The American Liberal sees no threat to freedom in burgeoning bureaucracy.*

To "secure the blessings of liberty" the founders of this Republic deemed it as necessary to *restrain* as to establish political authority. And it was the "Liberals" among the founding fathers who were most insistent on the restraints. Eighteenth century "Liberals," valuing individual liberty above all else, simply would not construct a national government without simultaneously making it part of the record that concentrated political power is, and continuously should be, suspect by those whom it subjects.

One of the great ironies of our history is that, in 1787, it was the Lib-

erals who most feared the Federal government, while in 1952 it is the Liberals who are insisting that free men have nothing to fear from a vast and unrestrained government.

In 1952 an American should ask himself these questions:

Do I have within me an innate distrust of government power?

Do I feel uneasy when I note that the Federal government is larger this year than it was last year?

Is there a voice within me which tells me that when free men no longer suspect government they soon lose their freedom?

If the answer to each of these questions is yes, then the voter should vote Conservative. If the answer is no, then the voter is a natural-born Liberal and he should vote for the Liberals.

3. *The American Liberal loves the social-worker mentality and despises the banker mentality.*

Among men today there are two extreme points of view which might be described as the social-worker mentality and the banker mentality.

The social-worker mentality thinks only of "helping people," of "doing good," of making every man more comfortable, more secure.

An example of the social-worker mentality was the Henry Wallace of 1942: he wanted to give every child in the world a bottle of milk. Another example is Justice William O. Douglas, of the Supreme Court.

In reviewing Mr. Douglas's new book in the *New York Times*, Louis Fischer declared: "He wants to feed, clothe, educate and cure the common folk of the world. In this manner he would entrench democracy, repel Communism, and prevent war."

The social worker is impatient at any question of cost; he wants only to hurry up the "improvements." He is so good and sincere and loving that he considers any obstacle a work of the devil.

The banker mentality, on the other hand, is concerned with costs. A bank is equipped with adding machines, and a banker is a trustee for the savings of thrifty men. A banker must ask where the money is coming from, and whether there is to be any return from the investment.

There is no denying that social workers are more pleasant people than bankers. They are more exciting; they are filled with enthusiasm over their plans; and their conversation is infectious. Bankers are often dull or unpleasant. They are killjoys; right in the middle of some exciting plan to bring electricity to Bechuanaland, a banker will want to know who is going to put up the money.

In the past a wholesome percentage of Americans have understood the necessity of using the banker to restrain the social worker—and then perhaps of using the

social worker to prod the banker. We have understood that if bankers were allowed to remain too long in control, then too little innovation would be attempted; and we have understood that if social workers were allowed to go too long unrestrained, then the costs would be too high.

The story of America's development is the story of compromise between social workers and bankers.

In 1932 perhaps the bankers had been too long in control and there had been too little social work; so perhaps quite properly the social workers were given control in 1933. Liberalism was enthroned.

For twenty years now the nation has been governed by the social-worker mentality. The bankers have been hooted at or cried down. The objective of our government was, for a time, to "feed, clothe, educate and cure" the common folk of America; now the objective is to "feed, clothe, educate and cure" the common folk of the world so that they can be saved from Communism.

In 1952 the American electorate should divide in this manner: voting Liberal should be all those persons who want to continue the social workers in power; and voting Conservative should be all those Americans who are beginning to wonder if we can "feed, clothe, educate and cure the common folk of the world" without breaking the bank.

4. *The American Liberal suspects thrift.*

Another of the ironies of our history is this: America was developed by thrift; thrift was once a virtue; and books were written about men who had the foresight to save their money so that they could provide capital for new ventures.

There was a time when Americans were concerned about government spending. Twenty years ago, working on a newspaper, I performed the regular weekly chore of writing an editorial on the national debt. There were a few people who read those editorials and wrote letters about them. There were a few Americans who still believed that debt was a threat to freedom.

But for twenty years now we have had a calculated campaign by the government — by Liberals within the government — to convince Americans that government debt is of no consequence. Mr. Harold Ickes devoted much of his energy to telling Americans that a large national debt is something to be desired — the more a nation owes, the more it has. And, as a result of this campaign, perhaps not more than one American out of five either knows or cares what the national debt is.

There are few newspapers today that bother to editorialize on the debt, and the reason for this is that there are too few readers who are interested. The Government debt

has become so astronomical that even most members of Congress have given up hope of being able to comprehend it.

In 1952 Liberals and Conservatives should divide in this manner: all those persons who do not know or care what the government debt is should vote Liberal — they have a true Liberal outlook. But those Americans who are beginning to feel uneasy over Government spending — who are beginning to fear that perhaps free men can spend themselves into slavery — those Americans should vote Conservative.

5. *The American Liberal believes in relaxing individual responsibility.*

To the Eighteenth-century Liberals who helped to found the American government, life, to an honorable man, was a serious business. Life was a charge; a man had an immortal soul for the development of which he was responsible. Life was, first of all, an individual process, and a restricted government was desirable so that men could enjoy the “blessings of liberty.”

But today Liberalism, as regards the individual, has acquired quite the opposite meaning. Liberals no longer want a restricted government so that they can enjoy the “blessings of liberty”; instead they prefer an unrestricted government from which they can derive the blessings of security.

It is Liberals today who would

relieve the individual of most of the responsibilities for his own existence. Life today is no longer a charge; it is something to be enjoyed. The purpose of living is to live easily, and the purpose of government is to secure the individual against risk.

The American voter in 1952 should ask himself this question: Should the government assume a greater degree of responsibility for my existence and demand, as the inevitable price, more of my liberty? Or should I insist on preserving my liberty by assuming more responsibility?

The American who wants more responsibility for himself should vote

Conservative. The American who wants to make further surrenders to the government should vote Liberal.

The Republican Party in 1952 should be the vehicle for revolt against Liberalism. No man who insists on calling himself a Liberal should seek or be given a Republican nomination. Republicans should proclaim their freedom from the fear of being thought illiberal; and the party should take pride in being called conservative.

Let all the Liberals be Democrats; then we can see where we really stand in America.

► It is, therefore, important to realize, and to confront, the disagreeable fact that many keen political thinkers have from the beginning been pessimistic about the permanence of the American form of government. Benjamin Franklin, in moving the signing of the Constitution, at the close of the historic Philadelphia Convention, asserted that "there is no form of government but what may be a blessing to the people if well administered," and went on to predict that the federal union "is likely to be well administered for a course of years and can only end in despotism, as other forms have done before it, when the people shall become so corrupt as to need despotic government, being incapable of any other." This ominous anticipation confirms the conclusion to which one is forced by theoretical reasoning. Either popular faith in the republican form of government must be recovered, or that form will continue to be changed until it no longer has any vital relationship with that laid down for posterity in 1787.

► The Constitution represents an unprecedented and unparalleled effort to integrate a system of government with an individualistic code of personal conduct. This explains the deep-rooted and continuing determination that

in the United States political action shall not be allowed to regiment the individual. Most Americans are confused rather than convinced when smartly told that "rugged individualism" produces "ragged individuals." The observation is clever. But it seeks to puncture more than commercial platitudes. To attack the principles underlying free enterprise is to impugn the traditional morality of the American people.

It is, however, a fundamental of American political theory that the clash of opinion between individuals and groups and parties should be vehement and continuous. As long as the American people differ with each other there is no danger to the Republic, for its philosophy assumes that they will so differ and its structure encourages them to altercation. Difference of opinion becomes discord and the security of the Republic is threatened, not when there is cleavage among the governed, but when it develops over the issue of personal liberty, between those who do the governing and any sizable or otherwise significant minority of those who are governed. It was to avert this ever present danger that the Constitution was drawn to balance and restrain the powers of government, giving political substance to the assertion, in the Declaration of Independence, that governments derive "their just powers from the consent of the governed." And this means the acquiescence of the great body of the governed — not merely the consent of a bare majority.

The Power in the People, Felix Morley

A STORY

Graveyard in Brooklyn

Calder Willingham

WELL," said the doctor, "it's great. That stuff is great. God knows, it saves lives. But looking at it from one point of view — I mean, look at it this way, I haven't done a mastoid since I can't remember when. That is, no acute mastoids. A few radicals. But not even many of those."

"What's a radical?" asked Tom.

"A radical?"

"Yes."

From across the restaurant table, the doctor looked at him. Two mournful eyes, somber, dark, and philosophical, eyes filled with loneliness, isolation, resentment, many things. In a low, rather bored tone the doctor said, "You might have one some day."

"Me?"

"Yes. A radical mastoid could come from that ear of yours. But let's hope not, though. It means you obliterate the middle ear, and these days doctors are losing all their operative skill for work like that,

for the reason I told you." The doctor sighed. "Yes, siree," he added.

"But why?" asked the young man. "Why obliterate the middle ear?" The term *obliterate* jarred his sensibilities.

The doctor slowly cut up the pineapple that rested on his enormous slice of ham. Seconds passed as he did this, eyebrows raised and eyes looking down. He cut almost with the attentiveness he'd undoubtedly use in the operating room, and it was nothing but a slice of pineapple. As for the long silent pause, this was a way the doctor had. He liked to pause a long time before answering a question, while he reflected, and his audience sat there waiting to hear what he'd say.

"Sulfa's ruined most of it," he said. "Of course we're glad, but it hurts our income and doctors are human. I do plastic surgery now, but a lot of ear men, I'm telling you, they're on the spot." The doctor sighed. "You know, I haven't seen

an acute mastoid in I don't know how long. Sulfa and penicillin — antibiotics all the time by the dozens. We just don't get acute mastoids any more. I'll tell you what happens, it's like this. The kid gets sick and the mother calls the family doctor. What is it? Well, doctah, Irvie has this awful earache, doctah. All right. What happens? The family doctor goes over, shoots the kid full of penicillin, and bang, the earache vanishes and I never see the kid. I never lay eyes on the case, whereas before there was always a call for me. And as for a *mastoid* coming of it? No, sir. That's out. No more. We just don't see them any more these days. But —"

The doctor held up his palms, almost shoulder high. "— hah," he said. "Progress is a great thing. But I'll tell you what a radical mastoid is, since you might have to have one some day with that ear of yours. A radical mastoid . . ."

Characteristically, the doctor paused and ate for several seconds. He chewed, eyes down morosely upon his plate, eyebrows raised. Finally, he continued:

"A . . . radical . . . those are chronic cases. Cases . . . of long standing. You get a chronic otitis in the middle ear, an old infection, a lot of scar tissue, perhaps you get a sort of *irritation*, maybe what we call *granulated tissue*, and there's a lot of trouble with it, those bugs resist medication, after so long a time,

you see they get *tough*. You can't do much with them, and an infection like that, it makes a problem ear. You have a problem ear and the patient keeps coming back, and back, and back, and what can you *do* with him? Those ears, there's nothing much you can do with them, and nowadays we try and do as little as possible, because it looks like the less you do with these chronic infections, the better off they are. Some joke, eh? Stay away from the doctor and live longer and so on — but those ears really are problem ears, and when you get a situation where there's granulated tissue, scarring, trouble with the eustachian tube, bad running discharge, maybe sinus trouble complications, pain, trouble all the time in one way or the other — well . . . sometimes, a radical is indicated. We . . . try to avoid it, but it helps a few cases — sometimes you have to do it. After all you *can* get some pretty serious trouble from a chronic otitis. Anything near the brain can get you serious trouble. A brain abscess, and other things, meningitis, and so on."

"I see," said the young man, swallowing nervously. "But what's wrong with sulfa and penicillin, why don't you use that?"

"No use on chronic infections," answered the doctor. "It's funny, but the truth is — get mastoiditis and we can cure you, but I can't cure what you've got now. Not that I can't hold it in check."

THEY were having lunch at a restaurant in Brooklyn. It was a good restaurant not far from the doctor's office. Very often they went there to eat, and the doctor, more likely than not, picked up the check, which was certainly convenient, because the prices were rather high.

The doctor estimated that he had done many, many tonsillectomies, an extraordinary amount, and had never lost a case, and it seemed that some doctors did lose tonsil cases. The operation was far more serious than generally believed, and required considerable skill. Children died as a result of this operation, and it was even more serious for adults. There was a certain danger of hemorrhage, and any kind of anesthesia was of course dangerous in itself. There was also the possibility of infection, and furthermore, a clumsy man could plane off an adenoid all right, but then snap off a tonsil and stupidly drop the tonsil down the child's throat and let the child strangle to death on it.

The doctor sighed and said, "Now and then, one of these greedy guys, a practitioner that doesn't know the operation, he's *got* to operate, he's *got* to make that fifty or seventy-five or hundred dollars. He can't send the case to me, he has to do it himself. One fellow — I'm naming no names — he told me he — he laughed, he laughed this guy did, just laughed at me and said to my face he was stealing my so-called

business doing tonsillectomies. Not many, but a few. This man is no doctor. I don't mean he's exactly incompetent, he's not what I would call incompetent, but he's just not much of a doctor. He just isn't. Some men aren't. Naturally all doctors aren't good, especially not for surgery. You need a natural-born skill with your hands, plus the power to concentrate, plus cold nerve, you can't let anything bother you. Do you know what I do when I'm operating and I run into trouble — say it's a really tough operation, do you know what I do?"

"What?" asked the young man.

The doctor was staring down at his plate, chewing slowly as he carefully, deliberately cut up more ham. At last he swallowed and said, "I whistle. Some tune or other. When they hear me whistling, they know the patient's about dead." The doctor smiled. "Not that. Just that it's a hard operation — that's all."

"Well," said the young man, "if you ever operate on me, for Christ's sake, don't whistle."

"It helps me concentrate," said the doctor. He stared down at his plate, as he continued to eat, and then he returned to his story of the bad doctor. The young man listened,

Reach to the Stars, *the fourth book of fiction by Calder Willingham, has just been published by Vanguard. Mr. Willingham is a frequent contributor to the MERCURY.*

appetite gone. Medical talk and facts horrified him. To look at a medical textbook and see illustrations of all the gruesome diseases in this world was enough to make him sick for a week. Yet, doctors and doctoring fascinated him. He listened. "Look at all the time I spent," said the doctor. "I studied. I concentrated on the field. You've never heard me brag or boast but anybody will tell you I've really worked in the field, I know ear, nose, and throat, I've studied it and practiced it for years, and isn't it logical that a man who's studied it and practiced it for years ought to know it better than a man that hasn't? Of course, it's ridiculous it's so obvious but it didn't even register on this man's brain, just because of a few measly dollars, no more than the down payment on a cheap television set at most and probably not even that — say a lamp for the living room, something his wife can spend an afternoon buying — that, for a human life. Some day I'll write a book about medicine! What a book! The things I can put in that book believe me it'll be a best seller — why, the dramatic situations, you don't know the dramatic situations."

The doctor paused and chewed for a few moments, then shook his head in a melancholy manner. "I hate to think about it. I really do." The doctor blinked in a manner he had, a blink that indicated that life was very rugged, but he himself

wasn't giving in. "Well, anyhow — this fellow, this doctor I was telling you about, he told me he was doing a few tonsils. Just like that. He's doing tonsils. All right, I *warned* him, I told him, I said, 'Joe . . .' We'll call him Joe, his name isn't Joe, it's something else, but he eats in this restaurant some time so I won't tell you. I said, 'Joe — look, Joe, if I was you, I'd leave tonsil work alone. Now don't misunderstand me, Joe, but I'm warning you, you'll run into trouble. It's not a hard operation if you know it, but if you don't, a patient will die on you some day.'

"Did that son of a bitch pay any attention to me? Oh, no. He wouldn't listen. He's greedy. That's what's wrong with him. Then one day a young married couple came in his office, understand, and the girl has bad tonsillitis, a really bad case, she really needs the tonsils out. The operation is necessary, sooner or later, so, he takes the case and does it in his office, and the only thing that goes wrong is that the girl begins to bleed to death and he doesn't know how to stop it. There're ways of stopping hemorrhages like this, but this man doesn't know how. He runs around the office crying and wringing his hands and grabbing the nurse and whispering to her, asking her what he should do, and meanwhile the girl is lying there on the table choking and bleeding to death still under anesthesia. He's too scared

to call anybody even if there's time, so he keeps shoving sponges down the girl's throat even after she's lost so much blood she's practically drained dry, he just keeps shoving sponges and whimpering at the nurse that he hopes it'll stop. He *hopes*. Heh. So, the girl lies there and dies, and meanwhile the husband is out in the waiting room reading *Life* magazine ready to take her home. Lovely situation, isn't it? Oh, the dramatic situations, there are so many."

"Ummm," said the young man.

"Now, the husband is out in the waiting room. The nurse and the doctor are back in the so-called operating room, actually just an ordinary consultation and examining room with a table and a cabinet of old instruments, and so on. The nurse is flabbergasted at what she considers practically a case of sheer murder. Right? I'm not saying it's murder. Potentially it could happen to anybody, but what does this doctor do? Don't make me tell you. *Guess.*"

"I don't know," said the young man.

"Guess. Come on."

"I don't know. What does he do?"

"They've been married about six weeks, this couple," said the doctor. "That's all. The young husband's waiting outside to take her home in the car. So guess what this doctor does."

"I don't know. Calls an under-

taker? Goes out there and tells the husband? Pulls out a revolver and shoots himself?"

"No, no, no, none of that. He threatened the last one, but he wouldn't do that." The doctor looked up, his eyes dark and mournful. "You can guess what he did."

"Well — what did he do, call you up?"

The doctor smiled. "Yes. That's right." The doctor, who had been eating steadily as he talked, put a fair-sized piece of ham in his mouth and chewed thoughtfully as he stared across the restaurant. "He did call me. He called me all right, and as it happened I was busy at the time with an office full of patients. But he called me, and told me a patient of his just died. 'Oh!' he said. '*Please* come over and help me, help me! Come over at once!' This conversation was very dramatic. He said, '*Please! Come over! At once!*' So I said if she's already dead, what can I do, bury her? But he begged me to come, so I got the car and went over there leaving all my patients to wait and this was back during the depression when patients meant something, not that they don't mean just as much today as far as any real doctor is concerned. In any case I got in the car and hurried over there and slipped in the back way and there the girl was, lying on the table dead. I examined her. She was dead as could be all right. So — what do you suppose this doctor wanted me

to do? He wanted me to go out there in the waiting room, and tell that husband *I* did the operation. I did it?! I did the operation?! How do you like that? And what do you suppose his logic was? Well, you see the idea was that if I told the boy I did it, then what I would do would be to tell the boy it was a serious case, and couldn't be helped, it was one of those things, then the boy would accept it, since I'm a specialist and have a reputation, being in charge at the hospital and everything. You see they would know I wouldn't lose an ordinary case, so if I went in there and told the boy, it really would look like it was one of those things. Do you get the idea?"

"Yes. Did you do it?"

"I'm telling you what I did. Wait and listen. So, with *tears* in his eyes — oh, he was weeping, tears running down his face — this doctor begged and pleaded with me to go out there in the waiting room and say I'd done it. Meanwhile during all this discussion the girl is lying there dead on the table. So." The doctor chewed for several seconds. "Now, what should I do? What would be the best thing? Do you know, I told that man, in so many words, to go to hell. Why should I take the responsibility for his own stupid — no, I say, his own criminal behavior? Hadn't I warned him not to do tonsil work? Sure I had, and I told him I wouldn't go say I'd done an operation I hadn't done. But I did go out

and tell the boy his wife was dead."

Silence. The doctor was almost finished eating. He cut up the last of his ham, into very small pieces, as though to prolong the meal as much as possible.

"Well, what happened?" asked Tom. "What did the fellow say? The fellow with the wife — what did he say when you told him his wife was dead?"

"He accepted it," said the doctor.

"Oh, he did . . . mmm, well what about the doctor, did he keep on doing tonsillectomies?"

"For about a month he didn't do any."

The doctor finished eating. This doctor ate a great deal, and was rather overweight, if not extremely so. He loved food. It was his principal pleasure in life. He enjoyed sitting down and eating till his stomach was "painfully distended," as he said. At times, since he had a tendency toward diabetes, he tried to diet, but it seemed that to live and not eat was such a sad proposition he could scarcely endure it, and the diet usually fell by the wayside. Thus, having eaten a huge slice of ham, a slice of sugared pineapple, both his own and the young man's French fried potatoes, four or five or six rolls, butter, beets, acorn squash, both his and the young man's . . .

SOMEWHERE IN Queens was a small hospital made of brick, and to this hospital, one of several the doc-

tor operated in, they went in the doctor's Chrysler. To get there they drove across Brooklyn, first down Eastern Parkway then across and through a park to Queens — it was easier and quicker for Tom to get back to Manhattan via the Independent subway, rather than the I.R.T., but actually he went with the doctor because he enjoyed the doctor's company. On the way, there was a cemetery and tombstones, many, many tombstones. Most of them seemed gray, and on top of some were rocks, memorial rocks piled in little heaps like nuts, testifying to the visit of relatives or

friends to the grave. It was an enormous graveyard. Tombstones stretched everywhere, gray and dotted with brown rocks, an eerie, haunting landscape.

"Eh-h, graveyard," said the doctor. "What do they call it in the South — boneyard, isn't that what they call it? Boneyard. That's pretty good. And whatever you call it this is where we all end up. Penicillin won't keep you away from here, will it?"

"Mmmmh," said the young man. "Probably not."

The doctor smiled. "No doubt about that," he said.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Section 233) of The American Mercury, published monthly at Concord, New Hampshire, for October, 1951.

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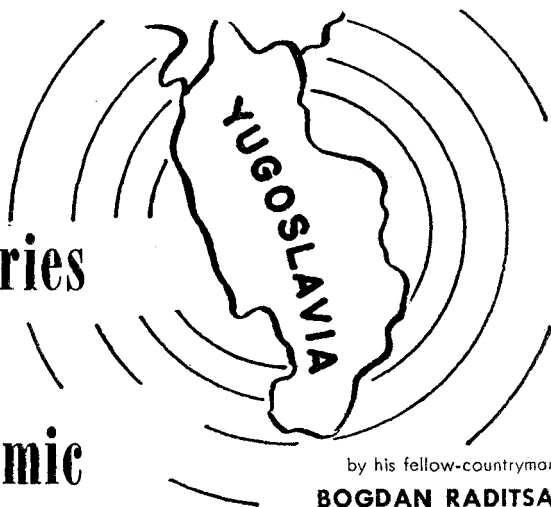
4. Paragraphs 2 and 3 include, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting; also the statements in the two paragraphs show the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner.

(Signed) WILLIAM F. RUSSELL, Business Manager

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 12th day of September, 1951.

A. Jay Segal, Notary Public, in the State of N. Y.
Qualified in Queens County.
Certificate filed with New York Co. Clerks.
(My commission expires March 30, 1952.)

My Memories of Louis Adamic



by his fellow-countryman
BOGDAN RADITSA

*The strange life and death of a man who
could never quite become Americanized*

LOUIS ADAMIC, who single-handedly convinced many Americans of the existence of a country called Yugoslavia, is dead. His mysterious demise, however, is even more controversial a subject than was his exciting and agitated life.

The police say that he killed himself, although at first they seemed reluctant to make any pronouncement on the cause of death. But that will not end speculation, no more than the police verdict of suicide closed the Walter Krivitsky case in which the former Russian general was found dead in a Washington hotel room.

Some time before his death, after

undergoing a period of tortured indecision, Adamic reembraced Tito and his cause — this time against Stalin. But the publicity handouts of neither the Stalin Communists nor the Tito Communists throw much light on the case. Tito's camp limits itself to the not unshared guess that the Cominform did Adamic in, as Stalin's gunmen have eliminated so many others. The official Communists prefer publicly to approach the case by way of metaphysics. Adamic committed suicide they say, and they know why. His death was the objective result of the position he placed himself in when he abandoned "the cause of the

working class" and joined Tito. As such, he took the side of Truman, Chiang Kai-shek, Franco, Nazis, and everyone else the Stalinist metaphysicians do not like. His petty-bourgeois ideology had not prepared him for the crucial battles of the day. Naturally, he became depressed, isolated. For him, as for all enemies of Stalinist liberation, there was no way out. He took his life, another decadent bourgeois tendency. The future belongs to the men of steel.

People who knew Adamic well — and I was one of them — have reacted with almost unanimous skepticism to the suggestion that he killed himself. If there is such a thing as the "non-suicide" type, Adamic belonged to it. He was ambitious, money loving, fame-obsessed. He was selfish and egotistic; he had worked out an informal, everyday technique for using people to promote his books and ideas that was most impressive. Moreover, he had plans — and plans always mean the future.

He was writing a book. It was a large, detailed book, the book of a man who again has a Cause. It was ready to be published by a well-known house, and seemed certain to hit the bestseller lists. It would increase his fame, it would make him money, it would advance his Cause. It is most unlikely that such a man would kill himself at such a time — not before the reviews, so to speak.

So those who knew Adamic well will continue to doubt that he took his life.

TO THE YUGOSLAVS, Adamic was a writer to be admired or hated. One's political convictions dictated one's appraisal. But all Yugoslavs were in agreement that he was the most powerful journalistic voice their small country had in the "outside world."

To the Slavs in the United States, and other minority groups, Adamic was the author of the idea of the "nations' nation." He became the voice of eager-to-adjust immigrants when he declaimed the responsible idea that the United States was no longer a nation in which only those of Mayflower stock had a right to participation and leadership.

Unfortunately, however, Adamic was not content to rest with the Jeffersonian philosophy of tolerance and respect for all human beings. He "enriched" his philosophy with Marxist and Soviet ideas. He favored America integrating its newer citizens, but he also asserted that this could be done fully only under a Soviet system. During the war he saw Tito, through his Marxist glasses, as a new Lincoln or Jefferson in the Balkans. At a time when the peoples of the Balkans were genuinely desperate for Lincolns and Jeffersons, Adamic helped to bring to them a local Stalin.

He published a book in the war

years called *Two-Way Passage*. In it he expounded his belief that Americans of Slavic, German, and Italian descent should bring democracy from America back to the old countries. His book impressed Mrs. Roosevelt very much, and she introduced the author and his book to her husband.

It was largely by means of this book that Adamic became very widely accepted as *the* American — and later Soviet-American — expert on the Balkans. When Yugoslavia played a prominent part in the war, Adamic's pride in his origin waxed. He was now his old country's interpreter in the country to which he had gone. Many Americans relied on Adamic to keep them informed.

It was a role for which he was prepared. He came to this country at the age of fourteen. His parents were peasants. In the United States, he first worked as a newspaper loader for a Slovenian foreign language paper in New York. He served as a soldier in the first great war, and, when out of uniform, made his living as a textile worker and longshoreman. He experienced the great depression and wrote about it. He continued to hate those in his native land who were influential, the Catholic Church and the intelligentsia, neither of which has at any time found him to be an important writer.

In America people thought more of him. Here, the fact that he lacked

a solid European education, that he had never even attended high school, that he possessed an extremely superficial knowledge of European culture, literature, and history, was unimportant. I talked with him often in the Slovenian tongue; his knowledge of it was primitive, surprisingly poor. His knowledge of Yugoslav history was scanty and inaccurate. When he wrote on the subject, he often evinced ignorance of basic facts. His prose was alive and often brilliant, but those of his books dealing with Yugoslavia were never translated into Yugoslav — a fact unknown to almost all Americans — because no one would take them seriously. They were mostly the products of hasty journalism, readable and apparently informative.

His knowledge and understanding of Europe, old and new, was confused, limited, and biased. He had an instinctive taste for the worst elements of the Marxist analysis of European developments. Complexities, nuances, subtleties eluded his understanding. He was a typical

Bogdan Raditsa, ex-Yugoslav diplomat and ex-Tito aide, worked closely with Louis Adamic from 1940 to 1944 in behalf of their common fatherland. In 1945 he returned to Yugoslavia to head Tito's Foreign Press Department, found he did not like either Communism or the dictator, escaped to America at the end of 1946 to stay.

example of that South Eastern European *half-intelligentsia* whose only answer to the problems of the modern world was Communism or Fascism. His books on Yugoslavia, as we have said, were enjoyable, but they were rife with inanities, inaccuracies, and distorted "socialist" judgments. Given his intellectual base, it is not difficult to understand how he could have concluded *My Native Land* by asserting that the only way out for Yugoslavia was to become — together with all of Europe — a Russian-Communist colony.

In the United States, given his fashionable and impressive defects, he became a success. *The Native's Return* was a choice of the Book-of-the-Month Club. His articles were printed by the mass-circulation magazines. His Horatio Alger triumph was a spectacular example of what an immigrant can achieve in the United States. Millions of new Americans, who had benefited infinitely less in material ways, *loved* their new country. But Adamic was not very happy here. He had a place in the center of American intellectual life and handled the English language better than he did his old tongue. He was famous and earned much. But he was restless. Soviet Communism, he believed, was the only answer to his unease. America had been nice to him. But he did not feel American. And his tragedy was that he had also lost his European heritage.

THE SENSE OF inferiority he brought with him as a member of the small and persecuted Yugoslav nation was the heart of his personal tragedy. He hated the British, could not adjust here, and looked to the Russians. He observed the world with that neurotic sense of superiority that is a characteristic of the second-rate intellectual. Accepted as a Slav interpreter, he never gained that insight that comes easily even to the uneducated Slav immigrants who know quite simply that they arrived here penniless and far from happy, and that this country has given them a chance to achieve much, with even better prospects for their children, a notion that sophisticated American intellectuals have long derided but not eradicated from the minds of men who can testify to its truth. Adamic, one of the world's generation of sad little boys, looked on Moscow as a father, as a prophet, as a deliverer.

Such was the psychological world he lived in when I used to see him often. This was the belief that he brought into the United Committee of South Slav Americans which he helped establish to aid in propagating his dominating idea among Americans of Yugoslav descent. Such was the idea he wanted to insinuate into White House policy when he visited Roosevelt — and unexpectedly Churchill — on that famous evening which he described at book length in *Dinner at the*

White House. One result of this book was that Churchill sued him for libel and was awarded \$20,000 in damages. I know the story of that evening, and to me it illustrates the essential Adamic better than almost anything else.

On January 13, 1942, some hours before the famous White House dinner (with Mrs. Roosevelt in attendance as well as the President and Churchill), Adamic telephoned me at my apartment in Washington. I was then Chief of the Press Service in the Yugoslav Embassy. My wife answered and Adamic asked her whether he and Stella, his wife, could come to our apartment to change their clothes. Washington was terribly crowded, and no room was available in any hotel. My wife immediately invited them over.

A little before dark the Adamics arrived at our apartment on upper Sixteenth Street. They were very excited as they told us of the evening before them, and my wife and I shared their pleasure. That Adamic had been invited to the White House did not come as a surprise to me. I had been aware of Mrs. Roosevelt's keen interest in *Two-Way Passage*. Louis and Stella changed their clothes quickly, and there was time for conversation on the war and Yugoslav events. Stella was uninhibitedly gay. Louis, however, was, as usual, pensive and restless. His somewhat affected smile never left his face. I drove them to

Union Station (where they left their bags) and then to the White House. Louis promised to tell me soon about the evening.

Later in the evening Louis called again. His voice was charged with excitement. Their train did not leave until after midnight. Could they drop in on us again? They were anxious to talk to someone right away. He asked me to call a former Yugoslav military attache to whom he also wanted to tell the news.

When Adamic and his wife arrived, their eyes were shining. They had been very impressed by the evening. Mrs. Roosevelt had been especially charming. The President had been there, and they made us guess before they would consent to tell of Churchill's presence. It was surprising news; everyone in Washington had thought that Churchill had left several days before. Stella had been so worked-up that she had forgotten to eat. Now my wife cooked up some scrambled eggs for her.

ADAMIC TOLD ME and the military attache what he considered to be the most important news of the evening. He had urged the President and the Prime Minister to send help as soon as possible to General Mikhailovich, who was fighting against the Nazis in the Yugoslav mountains — unaided by the allies. Louis was a great admirer of Mikhailovich at the time and passionately favored

the sending of Allied personnel to Chetnick headquarters.

In reading *Dinner at the White House* I was not too astonished to learn that Louis and Stella had "changed evening clothes in the Union Depot's washrooms, where several other people were doing the same thing." The book went on to disclose that they had checked their suitcase and "sat in the crowded waiting room, glancing alternately at the afternoon papers and at the clock on the wall until it was time to go to the White House." I was not distressed to see my bedroom and washroom transformed into that of the Union Depot. Louis, you see — and it was the man — was dangling a detail before the "underdogs." It seemed to say: "You know, we are plain people, and we could find no other place to change our clothes in capitalistic Washington."

Nor did I mind having my car transformed into a taxi, the visits to my home omitted, but what shocked me is that although the book devotes more than half its length to a supposedly complete account of the conversation at dinner, it says nothing — not a word — about what must have been the essential issue raised. The book says nothing about Adamic's intervention with Roosevelt and Churchill in favor of Mikhailovich. On the contrary, Adamic gives the reader the impression that at the time he knew that Mikhailovich (who was killed by Tito)

was fated for a tragic end.

This is not a detail. By the time he wrote his book the Stalinists had made the name of Mikhailovich a synonym for infamy all over the world. Louis's politics therefore rearranged his memories. Had he reported his previous attitude, he could not have so easily white-washed the Soviet Union and the Yugoslav Communists who at that time were Stalin's puppets. Adamic, plumping for the Soviet cause in *Dinner at the White House*, wrote in that book: "The Mikhailovich legend was a hoax perpetrated by the Yugoslav government-in-exile." Had he not distorted his memory — had he printed the story as he told it to me right after the dinner — he would have had to add the name of Louis Adamic to the list of perpetrators of the "hoax." Aided by other pro-Soviet propagandists, Adamic's revised line on Mikhailovich became a common refrain in America — where it is now difficult for the Communists to win positive approval for the Soviets, but so often easy to influence many "liberals" to denounce Moscow's enemies.

Adamic's failure to mention his two visits to my home on his exciting evening is rather easily explained. When I returned to the United States in 1946, after severing all relations with Tito, I became — in Adamic's eyes — a traitor and a renegade. Contrary to the high idealism which Adamic so glibly ex-

pressed. he never really admired people who were willing to sacrifice opportunism for a more conscientious path. Men who joined Tito's Government after Yalta and who were not Communists were made to pay, and are paying, for their ideals. These men did not receive sympathy from dictator-loving Adamic, only contempt. Louis knew well that — with the exception of myself — all of those who helped Tito in London and Washington have ended their lives in Tito's prisons or in forced labor camps, or are surviving miserably. Yet Adamic never said a word publicly in defense of these people whose only folly was to help Tito — yet not be Communists.

Adamic's judgment of people stemmed from his creed, and when others did not share that creed or opposed it, he hated them. What Adamic's creed was can be learned from this passage from his *My Native Land*:

I see now that the salvation of the Yugoslav people and other small backward nations in that part of the world lies, clearly and inescapably, in the direction of Russia. They will have to overthrow their present racketeer rulers, form a Balkan or East European federation of collectivist national republics and in some mutually satisfactory way, attach themselves to the U.S.S.R.

Now I see why the Russian Revolution was necessary, from the

standpoint not only of backward, peasant Russia, but of the world at large.

His creed colored his suggestions and proposals which can be understood only in terms of that coloration. In *Dinner at the White House*, he developed his "two-way passage" idea and told how he and some friends wanted to create an "American Foreign Legion," composed of European-educated Americans of foreign birth who would act as the spearhead of the American Army to "further a democratic set-up" in Greece, Yugoslavia, and Italy. It is quite obvious what political complexion would dominate the foreign legionnaires who would be selected by Adamic and his Communist-front United Committee of South Slavic Americans.

ADAMIC'S INFLUENCE in the White House on Yugoslavian affairs was considerable. This can be seen from a previously unpublished letter that President Roosevelt sent Adamic shortly after the White House dinner. It was a reply to a letter that Adamic had sent the President.

March 3, 1942

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

My dear Mr. Adamic:

Your letter of February 3 has been very useful in the studies and discus-

sions which are in progress concerning eventual methods of military operations in enemy-occupied countries.

While the projects which might be worked out would by their nature be unsuitable for discussion in correspondence, I can assure you that the Government departments and agencies interested in work of this kind are giving serious examination to many factors such as those you mention. They are obliged of course to coordinate their discussions, since questions regarding foreign enlistments, finance, selective service classifications, etc., all enter into the matter, as well as considerations of general war strategy.

The information and suggestions contained in your interesting letter, concerning Yugoslavia and Greece in particular, will be most helpful in this work.

Very sincerely,

(signed) Franklin D. Roosevelt
Mr. Louis Adamic
Milford, New Jersey

This letter may help to explain why Louis Adamic was selected as one of the most influential associates of Mayor LaGuardia when, on March 31, 1943, the Associated Press reported that LaGuardia would "be commissioned a brigadier general to serve as an administrator in North Africa and perhaps in Italy after an invasion." The Yugoslav Communists, who at that time wanted Yugoslavia to be a part of the Soviet Union, received the news

with suspicion. Later they were overjoyed to find LaGuardia and Adamic among their most sincere and outspoken supporters.

The real Adamic could have been recognized when Tito was chosen by the Big Three as the man to be supported. Adamic campaigned for Mikhailovich almost until the very day when Moscow's line changed and, suddenly, Tito was given the mantle as Yugoslavia's man of destiny. The day on which the *Daily Worker* and the American Communist Party received orders to drop Mikhailovich and begin slandering him as a "traitor" to the Allied cause, on that same day Louis Adamic propagated that new line. He did not worry about the change. His only cause for concern was how most effectively to present the news in bourgeois American publications, and make it seem to make sense. Dropping Mikhailovich, he now did all he could to help prepare the way for the Communist conquest of Yugoslavia, the Balkans, and all Europe.

Adamic was in contact with the Yugoslav Communists from the time when he first visited Yugoslavia. In his *The Native's Return*, and in the *New Masses*, he had published reports on underground Communist activities in pre-war Yugoslavia. Among his friends were a number of Yugoslavia's leading Communists, the most prominent being Boris Kidric, Tito's present

economic chief. When he lacked information he was furnished it at Communist Party headquarters on Manhattan's Thirteenth Street or by Yugoslav Communists from Pittsburgh. Also useful was Tito's radio station, "Free Yugoslavia," whose headquarters were in Tiflis in the Soviet Union.

By the end of 1942 Adamic was the leading force in the organization of the United Committee of South Slav Americans, a front organization — in which the Communist Party, as we discovered later, was in real control. At that time he repeated again and again that Yugoslavia had to become part of the Soviet Union. "They want to go the Russian way and Russia-ward."

The American Communists of Yugoslav descent distributed Adamic's books everywhere as their most effective propaganda. His books were sold to immigrants who did not even know how to read them. He addressed meetings at which few understood the language in which he talked. But the fanatic Communists translated Adamic's thinking into such simply-understood slogans as this: "You are going, you Slavs, to lead the world! Not only in Europe, but even here in this country — thanks to Russia. The American Slavs will become the leading group, the new uppercrust." At the time Adamic wrote: "I believe that the Congress [of American Slovenians] should be deeply im-

pressed by the fact that Soviet Russia is the only great power so far which has officially and unequivocally expressed itself in favor of a united Slovenia . . ."

There came a day when I felt certain that Louis Adamic knew fully what Communism is and embraced it — not out of stumbling confusion but as a fanatic adherent. That was the afternoon in November 1944 before I left this country on my way back to Tito's Yugoslavia. Adamic, the great capitalist hater, was living at the St. Regis Hotel. He gave me his opinions at length, lying on his bed in an extremely comfortable room. I will reproduce the essence of what he said, since no one can remember exact language after so long a time.

You are going back to Yugoslavia, he said. I beg you not to be disillusioned with what you see at first. The Communists are tough people. They do not trust anyone. They have to be like that. They *cannot* trust anyone. They came to power against great odds. You will see things which you will not be easily able to accept morally. Do not moralize! In order to win the Communists cannot worry about morals. Has the bourgeoisie been moral toward them? The people who are in power in Yugoslavia are not sentimental and romantic. Idealism is a luxury to them. They have to be tough in order to remain in power because they had all the peo-

ple against them when they came to power. They know that they were accepted by the Western powers because of their strength. That is why you will have to reeducate yourself if you want to become one of them, or if you want to survive over there. What you have done so far cannot be considered as a serious contribution to their cause. You will have to give and prove yourself, more and more. Do not be afraid of blood. The Revolution has to be bloody, merciless and ruthless.

These were the sentiments Louis Adamic expressed to me on the eve of my passage back. In normal times I would have remained in the United States. But the desire to return to my native land proved stronger than the words of a man whom I considered not able to speak for my old country. When I went back, however, I recalled Adamic's words many times. He knew what kind of people the Communists were. In his mind, he was one of them.

ADAMIC WAS NOT a sentimentalist. To him history was a material development, in which the Communists were the most dynamic actors. History belonged to them. Their triumph was inevitable. His place was with them. The free ways of the Western democracies were a thing of the past. But his mission was in America where he had to help prepare the disintegration of democ-

racy. That is why he depicted the Communist conquest of Yugoslavia as a spontaneous and popular achievement. That is why he presented Tito as a Yugoslav Lincoln. To achieve his end, he published a personal publication called *Trends and Tides*. In its first "resistance number" (January-March 1948), he called for resistance against the United States. His publication, he said

spearheads a movement which must get under way in the U.S. during 1948 . . . a movement which must begin to *resist* by every moral, legal and political means, the artificially created hysteria now whirling toward World War III . . . *resist* the lie now astride the White House, the State Dept., the press and radio . . . *resist* the enormous distortion of facts and ideas involved in our relations with Russia, Yugoslavia, etc. . . . *resist* the un-American, fascist developments evident all over the U.S. . . . *resist* the militarization of America.

Then suddenly Tito was branded a traitor to the "democratic cause" by the higher church in Moscow. History, Adamic's great god of inevitability, now was strangling him, as it does sooner or later all men who think they own it. Louis had viewed the Yugoslav Communists as the vanguard of the great Soviet offensive against the West. He was pressed for an explanation; after all he was the widely accepted "inter-

preter" of his native land. In the leftwing New York *Star* on July 11, 1948, he furnished a short but significant explanation. Tito's rebellion against the Cominform was "a question of manners." Yugoslavs had too much of the individualist in them, and the Soviet Union "responsible for their country's security" had to accept the decision they arrived at. But whatever would happen, "in a Two-World situation, there is no doubt what side Yugoslavia is now on or what side she will remain on." Whatever happened, Yugoslavia was on the Soviet side. "Essentially," he wrote, "the crisis between the Cominform and the Yugoslavs is not political but one in human relations." Caught between two fires, Adamic thought that "both sides are more or less at fault" and that "from the angle of the Soviet orbit, it may be all to the good in the long run."

This was the attitude Adamic took with him to Yugoslavia, when he went for a visit. At first he sincerely wished to serve as a mediator between Stalin and Tito. Later, he altered his attitude more in Tito's favor. One can only guess at the vehemence of his opinions in his as yet unpublished book.

This much is clear. When the Tito-Stalin break occurred, Adamic did not like the development. He was shocked. The Yugoslav Communists, for their part, did not like his attitude. They had not liked

his dogmatic prediction in *My Native Land* that Yugoslavia would inevitably become a part of the Soviet Union. Playing a game of realpolitik the Communist Yugoslavian dictators preferred to let their ball be carried by conservative American writers of the Hamilton Fish Armstrong kind — as in his *Tito and Goliath* — rather than by doctrinaires like Louis Adamic.

Adamic could not overcome the brutal fact that Yugoslavia had been the first country to break out of the Soviet grip. He suffered when he saw Tito helped in America by those against whom he had opened a resistance crusade several days before Tito walked out of Stalin's empire. From personal sources, I am given to understand that confused Louis Adamic believed that Yugoslavia might regain its old position in the Soviet empire; he also played with the belief that Tito might outsmart both Washington and Moscow, and thus give Communism a mighty impetus in its hope of conquering the world.

Whatever Adamic thought in his tortured last period, he did not grasp the essential meaning of the present crisis: the Soviet Union does not want to and cannot help the Slavs fulfill their social, economic, national, and political aspirations. That is why the Slavs have hoped for much from America since the end of the war. The Soviet Union is not only not the Slav ideal — from

any standpoint, it cannot be.

In 1946, I told Louis Adamic — upon my return from Yugoslavia — that the Soviets were ultimately lost in Yugoslavia, that American prestige among the people was at its height. He labeled my view as reactionary. But there was no way to avoid recognizing the fact that the Soviet hegemony in Yugoslavia was doomed. The Communists could remain in power only by means of the most brutal force, or with the help of the West — the latter development having occurred since, with the former never absent in Tito's land.

Another failure of Adamic was his inability to see that the real revolution in East Europe can only be brought about by a flexible emulation of the American experience. The process by which many Slav immigrants have been made into happy and successful Americans was not Marxist. It was achieved because of the existence of American freedom. The fact that even he, Adamic, the professional dissident, could be a success, was proof of the vitality — if in some ways political immaturity — of the American way, which is not a slogan but a very real thing. In the contemporary world it is the face of the genuine revolution.

To Adamic it looked old, to Yugoslavs in the old country it is a vision of an almost utopian future.

Adamic's gravest failure was moral. He was determined not to recognize Communism — official or unofficial — for what it is, a brutal tyranny. Adamic, a little boy in a generation of outmoded, babbittish Left thinkers, preferred to enjoy his hatred of the wealthy and powerful, but had no relish for dwelling on the fact that the Soviet rulers have reached the acme of monstrous power. He was a semi-intellectual in the grip of an obsession.

We shall have to wait to see what he wrote in his last book. But whatever he wrote it is safe to say that he has not depicted the masses of his native land realistically. He has not told the American people that the overwhelming majority of Yugoslavs despise Communism, whether administered by an out-of-town gauleiter or a local boy making good at his country's expense.

Or is it possible that Adamic, the fanatic Communist, had begun to understand just how much the peoples of the world who want a better life innately hate Communism, and that whenever Communism has come to power it has succeeded because it has subjugated the people?

In Our Readers' Opinion

I think it's about time I expressed the feelings of a group of embattled farmers in Bucks County about your magazine. These feelings include my own. The MERCURY under your editorship is the only fearless, two-fisted American magazine in the nation. I had a double Bourbon after reading your last article about Truman. As you say, a calmly stated fact, during our current demoralizations, usually starts a riot. Start some more.

EMILE GAUVREAU
POINT PLEASANT, PENNSYLVANIA

Allow me to congratulate you for publishing the de Tolendano series on Communism. You are performing a distinct service to those Americans who wish to defeat the Party in an intelligent, non-hysterical fashion.

RICHARD D. ESPINOSA
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

YOUR AMERICAN MERCURY of May 1951, thank God, is the best ever published in these new United States. . . . This is to let you know your great book is appreciated by millions, but not so well by Truman and his followers.

A DEMOCRAT

In your August "Draughts of Old Bourbon" you make a few choice remarks about the "new barbarianism." At the same time you so ably demonstrate the fact that you are a living, breathing part of the "new barbarianism" that I couldn't resist the temptation to tell you so. . . .

MARY G. CREADY
GREENSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

I enjoyed reading: "Give a Man a Home, a Hilltop, and a High Ceiling." That is a fine piece of writing, and it conveys my feelings exactly.

R. BRYAN FLANARY
KINGSPORT, TENNESSEE

In Our Opinion

Your revived MERCURY has reminded me of the rag during the great days of Mencken and Nathan. The only regular cloud over this hallucination is the stuff called "Draughts of Old Bourbon," which are said to be the wartime memoirs of a . . . whom the Navy somehow or other made a Lieutenant Commander. I blush for the Navy that anyone like him should be able to boast officer rank, even USNR. For the sake of the Navy, and your readers who dislike windy fakers, why not get along without such junk? Amen.

C. T. ENRIGHT
SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK

You should have rinsed your mouth clear of all Bourbon and aired your mind from the "Mamie Stover" influence before you wrote "How to Think about Truman" in the August issue. . . . By the way, how old are you? Do you go to Sunday School? It would be a good idea.

LOUISE ABEL
COSHOCOTON, OHIO

I want to thank you and the author for your article on Thomas Mann.

ANN THOMAS
MIAMI, FLORIDA

Despite your exhortation in the October AMERICAN MERCURY, I shall vote Republican next time. So your ammunition was wasted on me. Which is just as well. More feeble ammunition I have seldom heard explode.

C. O. STEELE
BRADENTON, FLORIDA

I am writing my "Amen" to your article "Call for Revolt on the Campus." My twenty-one-year-old-tinged thoughts are with yours.

HAL SNELLING
DAVENPORT, IOWA

HOT LICKS and HIGHBALLS

Anecdotes from both sides of
the bar by our best-known jazzman

Eddie Condon



EVER SINCE the days of Hollis Peavey's Jazz Bandits, which is further back than I feel like remembering, seems to me I've spent a good portion of my time in saloons of one kind or another, either as customer or employee. If they ever figure out a way to take a picture of a brain and use mine as a guinea pig, they'll come up with a pretty good guidebook to most of the important saloons in the east and midwest and to all of the *unimportant* ones in both sections. Somehow I feel more at home in a saloon than almost anywhere else, the way I feel more comfortable with either a guitar or a glass, and if I can arrange it, both, in my hand.

My own place in Greenwich Vil-

lage in New York, which we call Eddie Condon's (how's that for originality?) is remarkable, in my opinion, for a couple of reasons. First of all, I don't think of it, strictly speaking, as a saloon. I prefer to think of it as a concert hall with booze. Second, it's probably the only saloon in the United States that once had a railroad running through it. I *know* it's the only one that ever had a railroad built in it, but I'll discuss that later.

Point I'm trying to make here, I'm not unfamiliar with saloons. Best job I ever had was in a saloon called the Bath Club, which was during Prohibition days, if you'll pardon the expression. That one was run by a man named John Perona,

who's still in the business, more or less. John now runs a place called El Morocco. At the Bath Club we had a band called the Mound City Blue Blowers, featuring Red McKenzie blowing a comb covered with the old *World*, a newspaper texture Red was fond of. Jack Bland and I played lutes, or cut-down guitars tuned like banjos, and Josh Billings played suitcase. That is, he played it whenever the customers would let him. He used a couple of whiskbrooms for drumsticks and covered the suitcase with brown paper to give a soft sound. When he wanted a bass effect he kicked it with his heel. The customers always thought they could do it as well, and it seemed like we spent most of our time keeping them off the bandstand. Josh today is retired to the lithography business. I don't blame him.

Another place I remember is one that was run by an Oklahoman named Sherman Billingsley. He's still in the business, too, running a hole-in-the-corner place called the Stork Club. Once McKenzie was worrying about an insurance policy. He had to have five hundred bucks or it was going to expire. Billingsley heard that, and that was all he needed. He gave Red a thousand. Red'd been under the impression that Billingsley was a customer, but when he saw that G he changed his mind fast.

The saloon I remember best from

those old days was called Plunkett's, a speakeasy on West Fifty-Third. That was where all the musicians — the ones who drank, anyhow, and come to think of it, what other kind are there? — used to sit around and wait for somebody to turn up with a job, or somebody who'd just had a job and therefore had money. That was the place where some ex-wrestler gave Tommy Dorsey a shave with beer suds and a gin facial lotion. That was also the place that Jack Bland cured Chelsea Queely's twin black eyes with leeches, one of which accidentally fell into Chelsea's mouth.

Still another place I used to spend more than a somewhat amount of time in was Tim Costello's, on Third Avenue, the place where James Thurber once scribbled some of his drawings on the walls. Tim is a good friend of mine, maybe because he's almost as forgetful as some musicians I've known. He used to start home after work and on the way drop in to see some of his other saloon-keeper friends. Almost always, in winter, he'd leave his overcoat in one of the friends' places. He lost more overcoats that way.

During the war, between stops at saloons, some of us gave a series of jazz concerts in various halls where they formerly allowed only oboes. As one critic said, "The oboes gave way to the hobos." Ernie Anderson helped get the boys together, and at that time he put the saloon bug in

my mind. But I didn't do anything about it then. We also made some records that were shipped to the boys overseas and we went on the radio for two seasons. The mail that followed surprised even me. I'd always known the real American music was good, but I didn't know that the public thought so too. I certainly had no idea that the public thought so back when they were looking me out of hotels.

Anyhow, the popularity of those concerts gave me an idea. I wondered if people might not pay money to hear jazz in a place where they wouldn't be slapped with a stiff cover or a rough minimum and a gang of guys in monkey suits encouraging them to step up the tempo of their drinking.

A few rash souls had been after me for a while to open a saloon, but I'd always held off. Once Burgess Meredith and Tyrone Power suggested that they would set me up.

"Let's put the money in a crap game," I said. "We'll lose it faster and have more fun."

Neither of those guys knew the first thing about running a saloon, and that was the last thing I knew the first thing about. During that period I was jobbing around town, mostly at Nick Rongetti's Tenth Street Jazzeteria, commuting between Nick's and Julius' old bar down the street. The reason I was commuting was because the booze was a little more reasonable at

Julius' and there weren't any people there asking me to name my twelve favorite Glenn Miller records. I used to go over there regular during intermissions when I wasn't on the stands at Nick's, and that's how I got to know Pete Pesci, who was manager of the place.

Pete and I hit it off right well. Through some oversight on the part of some editors of national magazines, I'd had a few notices, and guys have opened places with less reason than that. So we decided to have a fling at it. Pete agreed to go along as my manager.

We looked around the Village for a place. We wanted to get one that was out of the way, a little, because we didn't want people just wandering in, looking around, and complaining when they found out Guy Lombardo wasn't there. We wanted our customers to come on purpose. Finally we hit on the building that once housed the old Howdy Club.

Eddie Condon was a member of the famous group of Chicago instrumentalists that produced such classic figures as Bix Beiderbecke, Frankie Teschmaker and Benny Goodman. He has taken a leading role in creating public interest in real jazz. He is author of We Called It Music. At present, he is owner of an unusual saloon in New York where the best living exponents of spontaneous jazz improvisations can be heard.

It's at 47 West Third Street. The Howdy had been a sort of hangout for the type of man who seldom becomes a jazz musician, preferring more delicate music. When we signed the lease on Friday, July 13, 1945, we stipulated that we were moving in there with an all-male cast. The toedancers were out for good.

There was then a little matter of a liquor license. It was delayed, and the rent piled up. We finally opened on December 20, 1945, to a tremendous stampede. Workmen were still putting mirrors on the posts and hanging the chandeliers when the first people showed up, and we had to keep an enormous crowd waiting in the bar.

Tommy Dorsey showed up later and caught me in the crush. "How's it going?" he asked.

"Best vestibule business in town," I told him.

Bill Davison (Wild Bill) was on cornet, Joe Marsala on clarinet, Brad Gowans on trombone, Bud Freeman on saxophone, Davie Tough on drums, Bob Casey on bass, Gene Shroeder on piano and, when the boys felt lenient, I played my pork-chop. That *was* our band, with Joe Sullivan alternating at the piano during breaks. Wild Bill is still with us, and Bud Freeman comes in every once in a while to sit in. Joe Marsala I haven't seen for some time. Dave Tough is dead and Bob Casey is reformed. Gene Shroeder is the only

one who's never been out of the joint, except for one night. Ralph Sutton is now our alternating piano player.

When I'd played in saloons before I'd had to suffer through all kinds of restrictions. They hid the band behind a bunch of potted palms and you played until your eyes popped out. At intermission you went back downstairs and poked them back in again. Most places were against the musicians smoking and drinking on the bandstand. And the uniforms we had to wear! Everything from tuxedos on up or down. One place I worked in made the band wear jockey caps and striped sweaters that looked like convict's uniforms. In addition, a lot of places used to demand at least one rehearsal every week, which any jazz musician finds rather restricting.

When the place opened, I decided it might be a good idea to prove that jazz musicians were almost as human as drunks.

We changed the rules a little. There aren't any potted palms, and the only required uniform is shoes. If you don't smoke and drink on the stand, you're queer. If you rehearse, nobody talks to you.

The boys never took advantage of the rules, I'm glad to say. There was one there for a while who didn't exactly take advantage, but he came close. The truth was that he didn't get along too well with the hatcheck girls. We couldn't fire him, though,

because he was always six weeks ahead in salary. He never disappointed me. Either he was sober and wouldn't play right or he was drunk and couldn't. He was about the most reliable man I ever hired.

Thing that struck me about our place was the cross-section of people who turned up. We got them from all over, some of them from places nobody ever heard of. I couldn't even begin to count the kids who came in and said they'd heard us on that Armed Forces network overseas. One kid said something that impressed me a little. "Hearing you guys was the next thing to a furlough home," he said. That boy had a few free drinks that night. Sometimes old or middle-aged people would come in, trying to find out if this place was as naughty as Village places were supposed to be. Nine times out of ten they'd turn up later, having learned to like the music on their first visit. Every once in a while a loaded member of the Homintern would turn up, thinking the place was still the old Howdy, but we used to get rid of that type of guy with a black look or two.

We only had one rough time, and that was the first summer we were open. All we did was drink a little less of the profits and wait. Sure enough, things worked out.

A lot of people with names I'd just read about in the columns turned up, and a lot of writers whose books I'd read. Bing Crosby used to

drop in, and we allowed David O. Selznick — every once in a while. The three writing Johns — O'Hara, Steinbeck, and Dos Passos — used to turn up, and still do sometimes. One night, a busy one, Tim Costello came down from Third Avenue on safari to look us over. It was busy, so he put on an apron and gave us a hand behind the bar.

One thing I learned shortly after the saloon opened was that as long as the name Eddie Condon was over the door it was up to Eddie Condon to be there. Once a couple of years ago a friend of mine who owns a place in Chicago offered me an exorbitant amount of money to take a band out there for a month. It happened during May, our slowest month, and I figured I could get away with it. Once I got there, Pete Pesci was on the telephone every two or three days.

"Come back," he pleaded.

"What's the matter with your voice?"

"I'm gettin' hoarse from makin' explanations about where you are," he said. "How long can you stay marlin fishing, the customers want to know?"

We've had customers come in looking for excitement. They think because we're in the Village the place is a bucket of blood, and they're disappointed when they find out that the only blood is in the beefsteaks hanging in the cellar. We've had some customers that are

pretty faithful, too, ones who've come back night after night for years. Josh Billings, the rejuvenated lithographer, is one. He turns up almost every night and parks his Jaguar in front. Instead of playing suitcase these days, he's playing with foreign cars. So, in fact, are most of the musicians. Ed Hall, the clarinetist, has one of those two-seater Jags. Davison has a fire-red Riley. Johnny Windhurst, a boy who sits in on trumpet sometimes, and who is going to make a big noise some day, has a MG.

It seems that the boys don't get sufficient release in their music. They have to have something else to play around with. That's how the railroad was built. A couple of years ago, Davison, and Sid Weiss (the bass player at the time) and Gene Shroeder, the perennial pianist, started building model trains in the cellar. They put in miles and miles of track, running in and out of the kitchen, the storage compartments, and the locker rooms. When they were tapping their feet on the stand while they were playing, they weren't necessarily keeping time — they were impatient to get back to their trains.

Pretty soon people started going down to see the railroad, and before long we were doing a bigger train trade than a booze trade. It got so Pete would sometimes neglect that cash register and go down and take a hand at throwing the switches him-

self. Finally the boys stopped. For one thing, Sid Weiss left to take some jobs in radio. For another, Davison lost interest. The biggest reason of all was the cooks. They threatened to quit because the boys wanted to use the oven as a tunnel. Finally Gene took most of the stuff home with him.

A LOT OF people have asked me how jazz musicians can drink so much and still play the way they do. It's a tough question. Well, drinking isn't much different for a musician than it is for the average man. Musicians may drink oftener, but not more, proportionately. One of my boys said a good thing one night. He said, "By watching some of the more enthusiastic customers, a musician can learn just the right amount to drink."

We don't have too much trouble with luses in our place. Oh, sometimes a man thinks he can play drums better than Buzzie Drootin, our regular man, but not often. When he does, we just give him another drink, and pretty soon he decides that Buzzie is o.k. after all.

The type of customer I don't like best is the one who comes up to me, emits a few slobbers, and tells me he's got every record I ever made. He sound as though he's my number one fan of all time. And then it turns out that he's never even heard me or my boys.

I had one man like that not long

ago. The way he talked, he worshiped the ground I walked on. He bought me drink after drink during intermission — then finally he looked at me and said,

“Now, Eddie, I want you to go up there and play me some *hot trumpet!*”

I just looked at him.

“Don’t expect me to be at my peak,” I said, “because I’m having a little trouble with my embrochure.”

Fortunately, that type doesn’t show up too often. The type we’re mainly bothered with is the one that always wants to dance. We had a woman one night who wanted to dance and didn’t care who knew it. In fact, she didn’t care who knew anything. Her husband quieted her

down, though. When they left you could hear them all the way to Sixth Avenue.

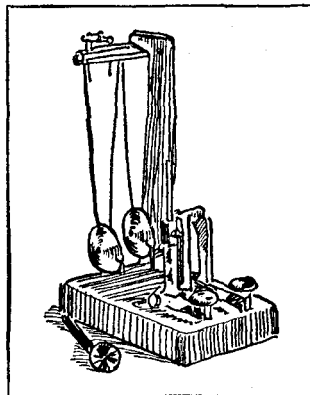
I guess my favorite customer of all is the one Pete Pesci told me about some time ago. This was the little guy who’d had about twenty too many. He wandered up to the stand while the band was playing and stared at it a long, long time. Then he shook his head in admiration.

“Man, oh, man!” he said. “That Eddie Condon certainly plays terrific guitar!”

I must say he had pretty exceptional ears and eyes. As it happened, I was back in the bar at the time. My guitar was lying across the chair, waiting for me.

*What the Experts Are
Saying on TV*

Opinions from the Chronoscope



By LORD WILMOT • SENATOR HICKENLOOPER
MR. FARLEY • SENATOR DIRKSEN

DURING THE pivotal political year of 1952, television seems certain to be enormously influential. Millions of American voters will not only *listen* to a discussion of the issues, they will also *watch* the reactions of candidates and policy-makers under expert cross-examination.

One of the most popular of these "information" programs — the one with the highest listener rating — is the Longines Chronoscope, broadcast from New York each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 11 p.m. Eastern Standard Time over the television network of the Columbia Broadcasting System. The program features the editor of *THE MERCURY*, William Bradford Huie, with one

guest authority on national or international affairs, and, usually, another guest editor.

The most interesting exchanges from this program will be published each month in *THE MERCURY*.

Lord Wilmot on Meat, Red China and Iran

LORD WILMOT: I am now a member of the House of Lords, but for seventeen years I was a member of Commons.

MR. HUIE: You mean that you are a Lord and also a Socialist?

LORD WILMOT: Yes, I think that is right.

MR. HUIE: Is there any incongruity in that position?

LORD WILMOT: Not at all. The Labor

Party is the largest in England. The House of Lords is our Senate, and naturally the Labor Party has members in the Senate as well as in the House of Commons.

MR. HUIE: Much criticism here in the United States has been directed at what we regard as a "soft" British policy toward Red China. How do you defend that policy?

LORD WILMOT: We've no soft policy . . . not at all. We are with you in fighting aggression, and we're going to see it through.

MR. HENRY HAZLITT: Have there been any embarrassments as a result of the fact that you have recognized the Reds and they haven't recognized you?

LORD WILMOT: Well, there has been misunderstanding. We recognized Red China long before the Korean aggression. We recognized it as a matter of fact, not as a matter of approval. We believe that the Reds now control most of the Chinese mainland, and that being a fact, we recognize it.

MR. HAZLITT: Are you in favor of admitting Red China into the United Nations?

LORD WILMOT: Certainly not . . . not while this aggression continues.

MR. HAZLITT: How is it that you are so short of meat?

LORD WILMOT: Meat costs dollars and dollars are scarce.

MR. HAZLITT: But haven't they sim-

ply been made scarce by the British Government?

LORD WILMOT: No, they were made scarce by Hitler. We spent our overseas investments on munitions of war before the United States entered the war.

MR. HUIE: Lord Wilmot, many Americans have been struck by the inconsistency of a government which has pushed nationalization in Britain now opposing the nationalization of oil in Iran.

LORD WILMOT: I expect it does appear like that, but in fact there is nothing illogical about it. We don't dispute the right of the Iranian government to nationalize the oil. What we do say is that they should honor their international agreement. In the process of nationalization in Britain, every contract was honored and every piece of private property was paid for at market value. We ask the Iranians to do the same.

MR. HUIE: We Americans understand that there has been considerable disillusionment with the Socialistic practices in England. Have you personally shared any of this disillusionment?

LORD WILMOT: No, I don't think so. The government now has been in power since 1945. There is a certain amount of swing against us, but there always is against a government which has been in power some time. But this is

exaggerated. After all, you've got a lot of Socialists in America, you know. I have seen the Tennessee Valley Authority which exercises vast authority over an area bigger than England. And I think it is doing a lot of good. In New York I run into property and assets belonging to the Port Authority. Now that authority in England is still privately owned. Eighty per cent of all our enterprises in England are still privately owned. But our big ones like gas, water, and electricity are publicly owned, and we call that Socialism.

Senator Hickenlooper on Yalta and Red China

MR. HUIE: Senator, does the Japanese Treaty, of which you are to be one of the signers, mention Yalta?

SENATOR HICKENLOOPER: Only in reverse. The treaty sets forth that no nation which is not a signatory to the treaty can in any way claim advantage from Japan as a result of the Second World War.

MR. HUIE: Is that satisfactory to you?

THE SENATOR: No, I'd prefer to see an affirmative abrogation, a plain statement that the nefarious agreements entered into at Yalta are repudiated by the American people as unauthorized, because the American people, under law, had delegated no authority for the unconscionable agreements at Yalta.

MR. HUIE: Do you foresee a time

when the U. S. Senate may forswear the Yalta Agreement?

THE SENATOR: I foresee opportunity for that, and I earnestly hope that the American people, through their Congress, can proclaim to the world that the Yalta agreements, being unauthorized, have no legal standing whatsoever.

MR. HAZLITT: What do you think of the British action in recognizing Red China?

THE SENATOR: The British have been a great diplomatic people over many centuries, and we must presume that they are clever. But, in my view, they did a most unintelligent thing when they recognized Red China and sent an ambassador, and the Red Chinese have not yet recognized either Britain or the British ambassador. I think Britain did it in an effort to save Hongkong, but I believe that the minute the Reds consolidate their position in China they'll seize Hongkong. So I think British recognition was a fantastically inept move. It has had a confusing effect on all the nations which are trying to fight communism.

MR. HUIE: How would you summarize your attitude toward the Japanese Treaty?

SENATOR HICKENLOOPER: On the whole, it is a hopeful treaty. I am disappointed in that it does not repudiate Yalta — it does not repudiate Russian claims to Sakah-

lin, Port Arthur, the Kuriles, etc. The treaty does, however, orient Japan more toward us and freedom than toward Russia and Communism. This, in my view, makes it hopeful.

Mr. Farley on Taxes, Third Terms and Roosevelt

MR. FARLEY: This country must give definite consideration to the reduction of taxes as soon as possible. During this defense period we should try every possible way to reduce non-defense spending. I doubt that this nation can continue spending fifty billions a year for defense indefinitely. Sooner or later we must have a showdown with the Soviet Union. We can't just run on indefinitely pouring out our wealth in preparation for war.

MR. HAZLITT: For twelve years now, sir, you've been highly critical of the Democratic administrations, yet you remain a staunch supporter of the party. What's your explanation?

MR. FARLEY: A man of my experience, of course, has very strong views on party loyalty. I was brought up in the Democratic Party. I was on the committee in my town, I was town chairman, I went on to become county, state and national chairman. All my life I have preached party loyalty to other men. I have stressed party harmony. I have worked as

hard as I knew how to make the party effective. I have rounded up members who were discontented over the outcome of conventions and persuaded them to stay in line. Having done this all my life, for over thirty-five years, it's rather difficult for me to consider any other course other than working within the party. I voted against Mr. Roosevelt for both the third term and the fourth term, but, having participated in the conventions, I had to accept the will of the majority and I voted for the third and fourth terms.

MR. HAZLITT: Then, feeling as you do, you don't take much stock in this effort to merge the Southern Democratic Party with the Republican Party?

MR. FARLEY: Well, personally, I don't think it is possible to bring it about. Party lines are too deeply rooted. It's a laudable cause, and good men are working for it. But if the people of the South are dissatisfied with the Democratic administration, they should go to the polls and vote against it.

MR. HUIE: History will remember you, Mr. Farley, in connection with Mr. Roosevelt. So I'd like to ask if, in the years since 1940, you've had any regrets over your break with him?

MR. FARLEY: No, I haven't. I thought it out long in advance and made up my mind that a break was the

only course for me to take. Many people misinterpreted my course. They thought that the reason for my opposition was that I was a candidate. But that wasn't the reason. The easiest road for me then was to go along with the third term and manage the Democratic campaign which was certain to be successful. I could have been the first successful manager of three campaigns. But I felt very keenly about it. I just couldn't go along, so I have no regrets.

MR. HUIE: Do you think that Roosevelt's place in history would have been more secure had he not run for the third term?

MR. FARLEY: I'd say yes. I have always felt that, outside of the Supreme Court fight which took care of itself later by death and resignation, outside of that I've always thought that Mr. Roosevelt's first eight years were eight great years.

MR. HUIE: And are you still opposed to third terms on principle?

MR. FARLEY: Well, my action in 1940 speaks for itself. And, naturally, I was very happy when the 22nd Amendment against third terms was ratified.

MR. HUIE: As an American, sir, I'm a little fed up with all these statements by men indicating a reluctance to become President. Do you see anything improper about an American aspiring to be President?

MR. FARLEY: It's the greatest honor that can come to any man. And I don't think that any American, regardless of the outcome, can properly refuse the Presidential nomination of either of our major parties.

Senator Dirksen on the "Collapse of Conscience"

MR. HUIE: You have predicted, sir, that morality will be the principal issue in the 1952 campaign. Do you believe that the cribbing scandal at West Point is indicative of moral decay?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: It's a reflection of the collapse of conscience in some areas in the country. After all, young men, whether they're in a military academy or on a basketball team, they cannot read the newspapers day after day and learn about all these speculations in high places, they can't read constantly about a standard of mink coat morals in Washington without catching a little of that overtone that is in the air.

MR. HUIE: You've been in Washington a long time, sir. Would you say that we now have the most corrupt government that you have seen during your long tenure?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Well, I think so, because at least there was semblance of morality in the early days when I was a humble member

of the House of Representatives in 1933. But I see an unashamed approach to this thing today that will frighten any American citizen who is interested in the perpetuity and well-being of his country.

MR. HUIE: Do you believe that the country is still capable of effective moral indignation?

SENATOR DIRKSEN: Our census re-

ports indicate that there are now ninety million Americans who either now or at one time or another were communicants of a church. No person, even in childhood, could have gone to church services without retaining some degree of moral stamina, and it comes back. And that, to me, is our best hope in 1952.

The Longines Chronoscope is broadcast "live" on many stations each Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 11 p.m. Eastern Standard Time or 10 p.m. Central Standard Time. On other stations, particularly in the Far West, it is broadcast from film at various times. For information call your local television stations.

THEY BURIED ME ALIVE

James Branch Cabell

GOD AND SHAKESPEARE. At least, I suppose I do thank God for William Shakespeare, with an indefinite cordiality.

I am grateful for Shakespeare, in fine, somewhat as I nowadays render heavenward my uncertain, tentative thanks for an as yet unimpaired liver; and for the droll dearness of that peremptory person to whom, how all incredibly, I am now married; and for the beauty of moonlit nights; and for the continuance, in howsoever qualified a degree, of my sexual desires; and for the possibilities of English prose; and for the elations of alcohol; and for my memories of divers once amiable and adored, long-perished women; for the wistfulness of sunsets; for the savor of poached eggs; and for the so impressively multitudinous horde of my books, books which were not anywhere before I created them; and for yet a many other miscellaneous amenities of my current quiet living.

For about God, I find, I do not often think nowadays, either one

way or another, except only with this constant but vague sense of gratitude for His past and present favors, in the event of His indeed being somewhere upstairs.

I can recall, with an exceeding clearness, just how I used to think about Him during the earlier eighteen-eighties, as an elderly Jewish gentleman, addicted to wearing dressing-gowns, who after the Crucifixion had joined the Catholic Church, and later had become an Episcopalian.

WHY I WROTE BOOKS. I long ago, in common with my nearer and more candid relatives, gave up guessing at why I needed to write books, that problem which nowadays so very many of my reviewers also dismiss loftily, as being without any conceivable solution. I know only that since I was sixteen or thereabouts, I have had this wish to be writing; and that the indulgence of this wish has proved to me a singular pleasure.

In most cases I have desired to

see published that which I wrote; and as befitted my Scots ancestry, I have desired to be paid for my writing as much money as I could extort from its publishers, those not over prodigal accountants. These two desires, and especially the latter one, still seem to me comprehensible, nay, even rational.

Yet I beyond doubt did write so incredibly much without any special expectancy of its publication, during the first eighteen years which I devoted to failing at authorship; and I have been guilty of an intolerable amount of both verse and prose to the printing of which I upon no terms would ever have consented. Such conduct seems to me far from rational. I cannot explain it. I know only that I have enjoyed the interminable and finicky labor of doing so much writing, which later on I typed, and then retyped, with zest, even though I was planning, when once its vocabulary and its cadences and its sentence structures and its prose feet and its other verbal kickshaws had been tinkered with enough to content me, to destroy every line of it.

The main drawback to this pursuit of writing as a virtually sensuous form of self-indulgence, as a sort of drug-taking, so do I concede nowadays, is that it has prevented me from earning any considerable amount of money. During the last fifty years, I reflect, I (with my so wide and my so widely squan-

dered opportunities) might have far more thriftily appraised each current trend of literature — or at any rate, of reading matter — and I might have written so as to conform with the spring or the autumn vogue, or even with the mental declivities of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, perhaps, if only I had not found any such intelligent behavior to be, for my limited talents, a physical impossibility.

Always I have been able to write only that which at the time I desired to write, whether it were a legend or a short story or a bit of archaic verse or a one-act drama or a novel or a dirty limerick or a flagrant romance or a dialogue or a river's history or an essay or an intimate letter to some deceased personage or even a dry-as-dust genealogical book. If I attempted to write about anything else than what for the moment had snared my fancy, then almost instantly I found myself unable to write at all.

ON REVIEWS. As I have remarked in another place, whenever since 1920 I have published a book it has evoked always the same brace of reviews — one of which regretted that here was *Jurgen* all over again, whereas the other deplored that my latest literary indiscretion was by no means another *Jurgen*. Yet even these inveterate acquaintances do not often fail to comment upon my "style," as a sort of staple commod-

ity, or, so let us put it, as a verbarian Worcestershire Sauce which lends to everything its own distinctive and uniform, unvarying flavor, such as you may or may not like, but cannot mistake for anything else.

To this sole end (upon all such occasions do I reflect guiltily) have I adapted and blended one with another — in varying proportions, self-consciously and pharmaceutically, with a meticulous preciseness — the literary manner and the phrasing and the sentence building of scores upon scores of authors, selecting always those two or three or perhaps yet more writers who for my book's purpose seemed best imitable, to the sole end that these piddling labors should half-drug and content me, selfishly, in a cloistered privateness.

And nobody ever caught me at these nefarious, so multiform alchemies; or at least, nobody of large prominence has been at pains to expose me. The majority of virtuosi have continued to print commentaries — and for the most part, not uncivil commentaries, I dare boast — upon that staple commodity, my "style," that "style" which, developing with *The Eagle's Shadow* in 1904, has prevailed steadfastly and unchanged throughout some fifty books, yes, even down to *The Devil's Own Dear Son* in 1949, so should I infer.

Only, I don't infer anything of the sort. My deductions have ranged quite otherwhither, with an im-

penitent thankfulness, toward that time-wasting of which I enjoyed every moment.

IN DEFENSE OF HACK WRITERS. In the teeth of a half-century's unarguable and all-profitless hedonism, I dare not affect any high-minded indignation over the far more rational practice of so far "prostituting one's art" as to write, more or less candidly, that particular sort of balderdash which "the reading public," or which some special magazine editor, may at the instant be buying with avidity. I likewise would have followed this sane businesslike course, and with a laudable oftenness, I assure my rebuking conscience, if only I had ever been able to.

For nowadays (and it skills not what I may have thought yesterday), nowadays common-sense bids me perceive nothing at all unpraiseworthy in the manufacture of such sleazy and impermanent reading-matter, not any more than I would condemn a reporter upon the staff of my morning paper, not any more than I would raise a lament over the

This article marks the return of James Branch Cabell, distinguished author of Jurgen, to the pages of the MERCURY. A book review by Cabell appeared in the monumental first issue of Mencken's MERCURY. His frequent contributions created a great deal of public interest during the stormy period from 1924 to 1935.

manufacture of chewing gum or of contraceptives or of motor cars. A popular need is being supplied, harmlessly and with financial profit; that is all, so does common-sense assure me.

Nor does common-sense find it to the purpose, not nowadays, that the writer who is turning out such lucrative pishposh may be capable of writing with more dignity and more art and more urbaneness and more truth, and in brief, of contributing his or her quota by-and-by to that astounding hodgepodge which we describe as American literature. To be ranked as an American classic, along with James Fenimore Cooper and with John Greenleaf Whittier and with the James brothers (but not as a co-equal in ever-living legendry with Frank and Jesse James, of course) and with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and with Walt Whitman and with William Dean Howells and with Willa Cather — or perhaps even along with the Swedishly admired Mr. William Faulkner and Mrs. Pearl Buck — appears to be somewhat compromising, says common-sense.

And besides that (says charity), most writers need to consider their indebtedness to the landlord and to the local liquor store and to the local grocer and to a wife or so, in the form of overdue alimony, and to the local Collector of Internal Revenue, and to their yet other legal obligations in general, as befits a

good citizen, before they can find enough time in which to consider their indebtedness to an after all, remote and problematic and a less over-urgent posterity.

POSTERITY, COMMON-SENSE AND DREAMS. Nor of course has posterity ever done anything for their benefit — or for your benefit or for my benefit or for anybody's benefit — such as would establish an indebtedness. Here is a truism which reason tends to neglect, and most orators to defy. Common-sense assures us, however, there is no sane motive for writers to be bothering about posterity. We instead ought to profit, so does common-sense tell us, by observing the remunerative forthrightness of our better statesmen, who, without too much unseemly boasting as to their acumen, concede always the unimportance of posterity's verdict upon their babbled imbecilities and frank skulduggery — or for that matter, the unimportance of posterity's annihilation — as compared with the results of an oncoming election.

So common-sense tells us, I repeat; but I need to repeat also that I nowadays have come to esteem with a marked distrust the upshot of common-sense and of man's rationality and of human logic. I very much regard as being more vital our human dreams, our requisite endless illusions, which defy common-sense, and of some of these

I have spoken, alike in this book and in all my other books.

Yet I do not mean merely those so useful tarradiddles with which the prisoner in every human skull must bedrug his captivity. I refer, now, to those how far more noble fictions such as we have all known; such as demolish the fetters of logic overnight; and such as, at least now and then, escort each of us away from his legal post office address into this or the other resplendent kingdom beyond common-sense. I mean, in a word, those high adventures which some of us at any rate are privileged to encounter during that superior one-third part of our living which is given over to sleep.

WHEN I NEEDED TO DIE.

One has Scriptural assurance that for whosoever survives three score and ten years all the remainder of his living is but labor and sorrow. Yet is it wisdom's part to recall that David, the son of Jesse, was not remarkable for complete truthfulness, either during the conduct of his homicides or throughout his hymn-making. And he spoke here, midcourse in his ninetieth psalm, I submit, with an extreme poetic license.

Because being rather older than is ordinary isn't, to my finding, no, not of necessity, quite so bad as all that comes to.

To the contrary, there is, almost always, I believe, a certain smugness

and a mild sense of individual achievement begotten by the knowledge of having outlived one's seventieth year. I have observed its parade by any number of septuagenarians. Yet, as concerns myself (whom I confess herewith to be my leading theme hereinafter), I at least was not overconscious of this small vanity upon the most unhappy birthday of my life, when I came to my Davidicly permissible three score and ten an exact two weeks after those so wholly dear imperfections which for so long a while, and which alone, had made living worthy of endurance — because it was thus that the grim outcome then seemed to me, howsoever transiently — had been buried in Emmanuel churchyard. I preferred not to go on living after the death of my first wife.

Howsoever transiently, do you let me repeat. Because by-and-by, very gradually, during the gray months which followed, why, but then as I awakened from the deeper stupors of misery and of solitude, I appeared, somehow, to have entered into a new atmosphere of acquiescence with what, at this season, I took to be life's over plainly revealed, naked and brutal ruthlessness. Life had hurt me, I felt, to the utmost extent of life's malignity. And so, all further misfortunes must, by comparison, become trivial. Whatever might happen to me henceforward could not, not really, matter.

Which was far from logic, of course; it was an emotional response to my entire anguish. And yet (as I noted with some interest), yet I found this cast of mind to be alike a tonic and a narcotic throughout that upset and bereft and bewildered period during which I attempted to confront unaided, but how very futilely, an existence which the not ever tiring, all-loving woman — whose beloved body, once as familiar to me as my own body, now lay remote and motionless and corrupting in Emmanuel churchyard — could not any longer keep cheery and easeful, or superintend.

AFTER ONE HAS PASSED SEVENTY. Today — now that I have regained love, along with a mild share of interest in my fellow creatures, and have yet another highly competent and most dear person born under practical-minded Virgo in complete charge of me and of all my doings — well, but today (with a continuing sense of impersonal detachment from my own merely personal emotions, such as every author acquires by-and-by), today I observe that this half-stunned acquiescence with life, as human life actually if a bit regrettably is, has become alike more genial and a vast deal more comprehensive.

For I lack, so do I reflect, no physical comfort. Unopulently I possess — so far as runs my knowledge — virtually all that for which, after

all, at my belated stage of existence, any rational derelict could well ask; and with life, in consequence, I to-day am satisfied, both tolerably and tolerantly, without any large fervor perhaps but without any tinge of resentment. I have nothing to complain of, I concede, handsomely, the conditions of human life being what they are for each and for all of us when once we have risked being born.

And yet I feel, I feel in some measure, that I am thus nobly broadminded because whatever may happen, or what currently is happening, whether to oneself or to others, and whatsoever is reported to have happened before the mendacities of today's morning paper, they also, had become a part of human history, does not seem so very much to matter, not with their former acute profoundness, after one has passed seventy, and when one of necessity has put aside man's customary delusions concerning tomorrow's being a new and more glorious day.

Because with one's own tomorrow, and with its imminence, one is but too familiar. And over the future of all other persons likewise, so one now knows, one has not any control. Meanwhile (and yet for no long while) a gentleman will attempt to meet the future with civility.

Thus at any rate does the affair appear to me now that Time has

remarked premonitorily but, even so, with a sufficing gentleness — “Quiet, please.”

THE VIRTUE OF EGOTISM. I become, it may be your criticism, not wholly unegoistic. Yet in this same paragraph must I exhort the rational to squander no unlimited faith upon any writer when once he deviates from egotism. About himself he, just possibly, may, should he so elect and strive earnestly, be telling you the truth. That the odds are strongly against this off-chance, one need hardly point out, in the light of every human being's desire for self-justification, or for self-glorifying rather, which tends always to embellish an attempt at self-portraiture. Still, the chance does exist.

But when a writer touches upon themes other than himself and his own endurances, his own joys, but above all, his own personal delusions, then that chance expires. He henceforward must write as to affairs about which perforce he stays dubiously informed.

For he, like everyone of us, he too, is serving his life sentence inside the cell which we term a skull. He knows only that which happens inside it. His confinement there may be enlivened, it is questionless, by as many as five radios — which it is our custom, severally, to call sight, or hearing, or touch, or odor, or taste — and the one or the other of

them almost constantly fetches in reports as to what is going on outside. Yet would it be over-optimism to fancy that these news announcements all reach the attendant prisoner unmarred by atmospheric conditions, or even that they stay uninfluenced by the whims of their unknown sponsor, who is under no constraint to be reporting the truth.

About other persons than himself, in fine, nobody knows anything whatever with assurance. Here is a stark truism from which I deduce that through egotism alone may any writer hope to attain veracity or ever to be esteemed credible. And for this reason, among yet other reasons, do I (at least hereabouts, at this present writing) consider egotism to be alike an aesthetic virtue and, in mere logic, a moral obligation which is laid upon all persons who desire to avoid repeating tarradiddles.

THE CEMETERY OF MY SCRAPBOOKS. Remarkably few persons appear to read any of my books, nowadays. I cannot wonder reasonably over this omission, in view of the fact that I myself do not ever open these books by choice, but only when I have need to look up some passage or another (as I have been doing lately), in connection with the glad taskwork of writing still another book. Yet do I find it perceptible — here to riot in understatement — that I, who was once

a leading personage in and about those scanty playgrounds of human interest which we nickname literature, seem now to have become, for all practical results, unheard-of thereabouts.

To the youthful, or for that matter to the middle-aged, flamboyant virtuosi of literature who at this present instant are discussing the transcendent merits of Francis X. Flubberdub and Gideon Gibberish and Natalie Babu English, as well as of Laura Caconym Nugatory (and who will be joined to other idols long before this is published), my name, and beyond doubt my writings, I infer to be unknown, yes, even by spruce judges who stay always so far too scrupulous-minded to deny being omniscient. Otherwhere, a bare handful of senile dodderers do seem to recall, just here and there, infrequently and with languor, that once upon a time, a most ancient time, somebody of my name wrote a very much overrated something or other which was called *Jurgen*. Such must, I take it, be regarded as the extent of my repute, alike among the stentorian intelligentsia and as concerns "the reading public" at large, nowadays.

And to the bleakly rational this must appear a sad comedown for any writer who in a majority of our newspapers' book pages and literary supplements, in that ancient time, was spoken of with fervor, upon every Sunday morning, almost as

often as Jehovah. He was honored by our then current virtuosi as a supremely gifted prose artist; as an unequalled satirist; and as an American Anatole France, as well as an American Walter Pater, an American Lucian, an American Arthur Machen, an American Congreve, an American Oscar Wilde, and an American Swift, so nearly as I can now recollect his varied prototypes. He was acclaimed, here to repeat my pet eulogy, as an ideational oriflamme in the battle of the nineteen-twenties against puritanism; and he was likened to I forget precisely what other large inaccuracies.

I forget because I do not haunt the cemetery of my scrapbooks, revisiting it only when a need arises to verify some date or some far-off happening. But with a suitable gravity, I can recall, even nowadays, that all these tributes and judicious analogues and ecstatic paeans are to be found in this cemetery entombed forever.

MY NATIVE STATE. With the pride natural to a Virginian, I recall also that by this impostor my native state was never hoodwinked. His books were not purchased in Virginia; they were not talked about except, just in passing, shruggingly; nor at all often were they even borrowed gratis from his birthplace, which, through time's purification, had been converted alike into a free public library and a shrine to the cul-

tural achievements of Major James H. Dooley in the stock market and the enlargement of railways.

Not ever was this ephemera spoken of in the same breath as were the ingenious Mr. So-and-So and the scholarly Dr. Somebody-or-Other, or as were the all-gifted Mrs. What's-Her-Name and the perhaps yet more widely famous Miss Thingumbob, whensoever their ever-living genius was acclaimed by the exiguous yet exigent "reading public" of Virginia. Because all these were Virginian writers in whom Virginia might take pride. They wrote real fine books, so you had seen in the *Times-Dispatch*, only last Sunday; and Miller & Rhoads (which at this period was Richmond's largest department store) was still selling a whole lot of their books, after having given them an autographing tea-party, with just heaps and heaps of people at it. Thus quoth all Richmond admiringly.

But that pretentious lewd humbug, that midnight assassin, that no doubt homosexual halfwit, who did not even have sense enough to know that — alike in novels and in children's stories and in biographies and in editorials — a Virginian must write always about the beauty and the chivalry and the peerless moral standards and all the yet other outstanding features of Virginia in fiction, why, but he most properly was ignored throughout our fair com-

monwealth, even from Lee County to Accomack County, except only when in Richmond the elite gathered to discuss, in happy whippers, the turpitudes of his how very far from private life. Because he was just like all the Cabell men, only much more so, and in more directions.

Outside Virginia, however — so may I dare assure a generation who never heard of me — my books were quite highly thought of, here and there, throughout a full decade. In fact, my books became the theme of that which exaggeration might term a nation-wide controversy during this period. And today, to so much of ecstasy and of clangor and of denouncings and of high disputation, Time has whispered — "Quiet, please."

THE TRAVAILS OF AUTHORSHIP. Well, but today, in my unknownness, I find I do not especially regret, or rather, I do not desiderate, as we niminy-piminy "styl-ists" might phrase it, that put-by pre-eminence into which I was catapulted by accident. Its one pleasing personal feature, to my remembrance, was the attendant plumpness of my royalty statements; and even that led me into incessant trouble with various Internal Revenue Agents, who do not esteem me an alluring quarry today. Otherwise, I found that being a famous writer interfered too much, and far too

often, with the pursuit of writing, with my main interest in life.

Because always and continuously my professed idolaters were attempting to trap me into doing something dislikable and laborious, such as autographing a few dozen first editions (each with an apt individual inscription) or answering the same inane questions over and yet over again, such questions as I have indicated in *Special Delivery* (if ever, through any out of the way chance, you have heard of *Special Delivery*), when upon Saturday after Saturday I replied to my postulants' so repetitious letters; or else into participating in varied forms of futile time-wasting, such as fornication with some hitherto unknown gentlewoman whose husband did not understand her, or revising a nitwit's typescript, or sharing "strange pleasures" with Wilde-minded young men, or addressing book fairs and women's clubs. Upon one occasion, as I must still recall with an incredulous shudder, I was invited to speak before a Chamber of Commerce.

I, who was born taciturn, was beset throughout my heyday by interlocutors desirous, babblingly, to find out whether I wrote in the morning or in the evening; what I thought about death and my ideal woman and capitalism and Calvin

Coolidge; whether my (non-existent) secretary opened all my letters; what would be the title of my next book; and who, in my opinion, was the most promising of our younger Southern writers. Moreover, I, who have always viewed my own personal appearance with a rational disfavor, was exposed over frequently to the cruel candors of photographers and of portrait painters.

And finally, I, who ever since I quitted my last diapers had been reared alike to be thrifty and considerate of all persons, including myself, I was faced hourly by the choice between submitting to these tedious evils, along with yet many other requirements no less distasteful, or else of disregarding my own personal bank account (along with my publishers' very faint faith in my common-sense) and the certainty of being adjudged, as my nearer friends among the intelligentsia of Virginia put it, just simply too stuck-up and too swell-headed for anybody to have any least patience with.

For throughout America these varied fawnings upon "publicity" were, even in my remote heyday, as they continue to be, a recognized branch of authorship. From every well-known writer such antics are not requested; they instead are demanded as a matter of course.



FAULKNER'S FOLLY

Herbert Poster

Requiem for a Nun, by William Faulkner. Random House. \$3.00. 286 pages.

IN THE HISTORY of literature, great novelists have always been a strange breed, but not so strange that it has been impossible to fathom the laws of their development. There has never been a group quite so difficult to comprehend and predict as our native major narrative artists. When they attain the height of their powers and the peak of their reputation, you would expect a corresponding release from pressure that would enable them to surrender the esoteric and involved aspects of their work. Time and eminence usually mellow writers, particularly those

who wish to sway society and promulgate a philosophy. This is generally the case with European novelists. The impulse to shock and confuse yields to the desire to reach and persuade. With his rational background, centuries of tradition and greater discipline, the European novelist ventures into the realm of the obscure with the hope of returning, that is, when his audience indicates that they have begun to catch up with him and to approve of his ideas.

In America, as the example of Faulkner makes clear, this is not the case. Our novelists adventure in a grimmer, more intransigent fashion because our society is not knit together by strong bonds of belief and

common standards of taste. In comparing Faulkner and Proust, Jean-Paul Sartre has made a somewhat analogous point. "Faulkner," Sartre observes, "is a lost man and because he knows that he is lost he risks pushing his thought to its conclusion. Proust is a classicist and a Frenchman; and the French lose themselves with caution and always end by finding themselves."

Sartre's observations are extremely acute even if they are based on a partial misreading of Faulkner and an incomplete understanding of the relations of an American to his audience. The fact is, as a number of critics have demonstrated, that Faulkner is not an apostle of despair, or "the barred future" but in a very plain sense a "yea sayer" to life, with an unswerving faith in man's capacity to rise above the problems created by time, evil and mechanization. "I believe that man will not merely endure; he will prevail," Faulkner declaimed in his Nobel Award acceptance speech at Stockholm. "He is immortal not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance. . . . The poet's voice need not merely be the record of man, it can be one of the props, the pillars to help him endure and prevail."

The last sentence is a characteristic expression of the curious relations that tend to prevail between

the major American artist and his audience. The American does not conceive of himself, as the European frequently does, as the sensitive instrument registering the moods and aspirations of society. More often, he sees himself as a seer and prophet with the invincible aim of leading his people from the wilderness. This is what pushes writers like Faulkner to reach ever more frantically beyond the audience's grasp for more splendid and obscure insights, a more violent and tortured symbolism, while at the same time, they seek almost pathetically for a common ground by the use of striking and even vulgar subject matter, or even by sporadic bursts of "folksy" humor.

Requiem for a Nun, Mr. Faulkner's latest book, plunges and rears in these directions like a wild stallion. It has occasioned among his most fervent admirers and leading expounders a great deal of perplexity. The tortuousness and straining which have generated such dismay are not caused so much by the experimental form or the use of wildly shocking, implausible materials as by Faulkner's stubborn insistence on playing off against each other the most sublime and popular elements. It is this excessive concentration on disparate qualities that leads one to conclude that Faulkner must have simultaneously felt and shrunk from an impulse to confront his audience with a direct kind of appeal. I think this

accounts for those aspects of this singular book which have provoked such exasperation in so many critics — the pushing of motivation beyond all semblance of reasonableness and the reemployment of those characters from the world of Yoknapatawpha who had the least distinction or attractiveness.

IT is this intractableness which is so much out of key with the form of the book, a three-act play, the most common literary vehicle of popular appreciation, as well as of that sentimental, vague religiosity so universally popular in current American art-forms. It is characteristic of our eccentric and baffling culture that the man who, more than any other, embodies "the young writer's image of the artist" — solitary, furiously ecstatic, inspired and the most removed from the world of literary politics and cocktail parties — should be the one to receive the blessings of the staid *New York Times* Theatre Section for his cooperativeness in preparing *Requiem* for the Broadway boards. "Mr. Faulkner," *The Times* comments sweetly, "unlike some other aspiring playwrights we know, is said to be a 'perfect angel' about revisions and everyone connected with the project is full of confidence." A strange nosegay for our earthy chronicler of the raw, blood-stained legends of the Southern backwoods!

These bits of evidences of Faulk-

ner's desire for a more easy access to a wider public help us to understand why Temple Drake has been exhumed, after a twenty-year interval, from *Sanctuary* and her story carried forward from the point at which it was left. *Sanctuary*, you may remember, was the book which Faulkner admitted was a deliberate, garishly sexual potboiler meant at once to revile and attract a public that had been insensitive to the quality of his previous work. It offered a horrific, titillating account of the adventures of a hare-brained Mississippi belle, Temple Drake, who after an accident with her drunken escort, Gowan Stevens, fell into the hands of Popeye, a fabulously evil, sexually impotent gangster. Installed in a Memphis brothel, she develops considerable fondness for the life and a tough bouncer called "Red" who acts as Popeye's sexual surrogate.

Requiem picks up a changed Temple who has achieved a formidable stature through the intensity of suffering generated by the contradictions of her life and temperament. In the eight years that have passed since the memorable scandal, Temple has married the reformed drunk, Gowan, has had two children and ostensibly settled down to the slick, vapid life of a small town country club set. Beneath the decorous, modish surface of this marriage, however, the relationship is tense and unhappy, strained by Gowan's insistent forgiveness, ostentatious

avoidance of the demon rum and brooding suspicions about the paternity of his first child. The marriage is also somewhat curdled by Temple's excruciating attempts to summon up gratitude for Gowan's magnanimity and her secret pleasure in her recollections of her adventures with Red. To keep something of the past alive in the midst of her bored, sterile existence, Temple employs, as a nursemaid, a Negro woman, a reformed dope addict and whore, in whom she confides.

Suddenly and melodramatically, Red's brother turns up demanding blackmail for the hot love letters she had sent "Red" during her whorehouse days. The old temptations revive in Temple and she offers Red not only jewelry and money but her person. She makes preparations to flee with him, and, oddly, her baby. The plan is foiled by the colored nursemaid, Nancy Mannigoe, who hides the money and jewelry and tries to induce Temple to change her mind. This fantastic episode culminates in a paroxysm of improbability when Nancy strangles the baby because she believes it is better off dead.

The sacrifice of the baby is, in all likelihood, meant by Faulkner to carry some symbolic, religious significance though its nature is not very clear. Nancy, herself, seems to be projected as a kind of more modern, more extreme version of the Magdalene myth. The only words

she utters throughout her trial are those spoken when she finally hears her death verdict pronounced. "Yes, Lord," she cries fervently.

THIS simple, heartfelt exclamation of piety occurs early and echoes and reverberates throughout the play. In a final scene, it undergoes a variation which is extraordinarily disappointing and banal. Before Nancy goes to her death she tries to comfort Temple who in her anguish has asked for counsel. "Believe!" Nancy tells her serenely. "Believe what?" Temple asks. "Believe!" replies Nancy. The flatness of this dialogue is not enhanced by recalling the more articulate philosophy of Faulkner's other works out of which this scene issues. Nancy's cry is a condensation of Faulkner's central, ethical viewpoint, namely that redemption from the contaminations of human life is achieved through suffering, love, and endurance. Whether Nancy's simplicity is sufficiently reinforced by what has been built up by Faulkner in other works may depend on the depth of the reader's immersion in them and his sympathy with the viewpoint. Taken in itself, the role of Nancy scarcely sustains the religious weight with which it is burdened.

The unnatural, stylized simplicity of Nancy's utterance lends weight to the notion that *Requiem* is the result of a determined effort by Faulkner to broaden his audience and

make his ideas more directly influential. It is not too farfetched, then, to assume that Temple's redemption serves to signify a kind of redemption for the author himself. Malcolm Cowley, perhaps Faulkner's most patient and illuminating commentator, seems to think of the book in this fashion.

Sometimes, we have the impression that the events of (*Requiem*) are being retold by a second author and that Faulkner himself has become a different man. Once there was an unregenerate Faulkner, careless of his readers but not unwilling to shock them; the author of novels about incest, rape, arson and miscegenation. Now there is a reformed Faulkner, conscious of his public duties, who has become the spokesman for the human spirit . . .

The new departure in Faulkner's work was already much in evidence in *Intruder in the Dust*, since it exhibited a "public" sense that had not been present in previous works. What most critics have by and large ignored is the fact that the assumption of public responsibility requires a very different kind of criticism. It is necessary to reexamine in a new light those ideas of Faulkner's which, previously, seemed to justify themselves by their overwhelming poetry, but which when examined in the cold light of actual events and conditions, tend to fade and diminish. This is particularly true of Faulkner's haunting, subtle, and

grandiose conception of the role of the Negro in the South.

The Negro, Faulkner seems to tell us, has achieved a greater moral depth and virtue than the Southern white through intense suffering and stoic endurance. The violence of the Southern whites arises, it appears, from the bitter recognition of their sins as witnessed in the "unforgiving alienated faces of the Negroes." Accordingly, the Southern white oscillates continually between the emotional extremes of penitence and anger. For it is only through the Negro that he can be released from the guilt incurred for him by his forbears and perpetuated in the present.

Now all this has a poetic and literary truth that is independent of the actual state of affairs. It can neither be substantiated nor refuted. It is the expression of deep, genuine feelings and either evokes a sympathetic response or does not. When, however, this rich intuition becomes the nucleus of a public appeal, a more rational examination is in order. It becomes apparent, for example, that the Negro himself would be only too happy to trade in the philosophic beauty and magnificence Faulkner endows him with for an extension of his political and economic rights. Moreover, he has been made the object of so difficult and pain-racked a mystique that an effective solution of his problems becomes even more improbable than with

prevailing common attitudes. In *Requiem*, indeed, the guilt and admiration of the whites for Nancy apparently combine to make it necessary that she should die in accord with some melodramatic notion of destiny rather than receive the reprieve which, one gathers, a group of white people less guilt-ridden and less flooded with poetic zeal would be able to obtain for her.

Indeed, the net effect of the play, as well as of *Intruder in the Dust*, may be such as to make many of his admirers feel that Faulkner's emergence into the limelight is not the happiest event of his literary career. It is an ironic fact that the most lofty and elevated concepts of humanity disintegrate more rapidly than less heroic notions when they descend into the marketplace. In Faulkner's case, the philosophy of the Negro has recently taken the very ordinary dixiecrat form of a defense of states' rights and a don't-believing-us-what-to-do-you-damn-yankees line of reasoning. Whatever their virtues, such raw sentiments scarcely shed luster on the philosophy developed by Faulkner in his early work.

While in *Requiem* Faulkner refrains from voicing this new-found social credo, an echo of it still seems to linger. And he has also pushed his mystique of the Negro to its most uncomfortable extreme in the figure of Nancy Mannigoe, ex-dope fiend and whore.

IN ALL, as a play designed to be presented to the public, *Requiem for a Nun* is an ingratiating piece of folly reminiscent of Henry James's similar ventures, the failure of which led him to confine his final efforts to the monumental, obscure refinements of his later work. As if to contradict his own desire for access to the public, Faulkner has resurrected as the spokesmen of his ideas Gavin Stevens, Temple's uncle, a singularly boring, verbose, and mystically motivated character who lumbers through the scenes so rigidly and humorlessly as to make the reader bridle in advance at any message he delivers. Again, he makes one realize that Faulkner is fated to thrust his beliefs at his audience in their most unpalatable form. The reader is not going to be beguiled into assent; he will have to surrender it. There is a kind of sullen Puritanic strain in Faulkner which compels him to view clarity, charm and easy persuasiveness with suspicion and hostility. Nothing is less suited to the stage than this kind of Puritanic temperament, which despite its sensual affinities can only appear in public in a hairshirt. Faulkner's audience is not going to be entertained but tormented; since, however, so many people nowadays will pay to be tortured in the name of art, *Requiem for a Nun* may yet turn into a commercial success.

A different Faulkner emerges when he foregoes drama and the

prophet's stance. In the narrative sequences which interlard the play, his self-contrived restraints yield to a lyrical splendor of language and affectionate folk humor rare in American literature. The speculative harmony he fails to achieve in the dramatic action is released, so to speak, as a by-product of these magnificent descriptive passages. It is these passages, which, whatever their flaws — their occasional prolixity and uneven pitch — create a philosophic resonance that lingers in the reader's consciousness long after he has dismissed the banal pieties and involved morality on which the action is based.

In Short

Melville Goodwin, U.S.A., By John P. Marquand. Little, Brown & Co. 596 pages. \$3.75. Marquand's latest novel is the work of one of our most able, if not our most profound, narrative craftsmen. The major story of a general and the minor one of a news commentator are deftly interwoven through a clever device that allows the action to shift back and forth between present and past in a vivid, revealing fashion. General Goodwin is not a very deeply felt or highly individualized character, but Marquand's encyclopedic knowledge of the American army, from the dog-face in the foxhole to the top brass in Washington, functions to keep him alive and richly symbolic of military virtue though the cynical

may find him somewhat idealized. He bears a striking resemblance to Hemingway's officer in *Across the River and into the Trees*; the two portraits reinforce each other and, taken together, compose an image of the American officer of high rank that cannot be found elsewhere and is probably as authentic as any other. The radio commentator and subordinate characters in the high-powered New York world of the press are likewise delineated in a knowing, sensitive fashion and with a certain amount of over-simplification. Melville Goodwin, U.S.A. is an engaging novel and, frequently, a poignant and perceptive one. *Lie Down in Darkness*. By William Styron. Bobbs-Merrill Co. 400 pages. \$3.50. This first novel is another in the seemingly endless series of books by young Southern novelists, exploring in baroque, spidery prose the decay of the past and the degeneration of personal relations in a deeply rooted Southern family. The Loftis family of Port Warwick, Virginia, seems like a gallery of familiar characters previously encountered in the works of Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, *et al.* The story of Peyton, whose harrowing beauty begets passion and destruction, her crippled, retarded sister, corrupt father and lonely, strong-willed mother has a certain power despite the fact that it has so much in common with others in the genre. It is also obscured by the iridescent, mystical fog that has

become a constant feature of the Southern literary climate. *The Grass Harp*. By Truman Capote. Random House. 181 pages \$3.00. A wispy, chic little fairy tale about three odd characters who go in for tree-dwelling to the consternation of the local gentry. A kind of mild humor is generated by this situation which is served up in the familiar Capote style, simple, coy, run-on and studded with metaphors and tropes which would be dull and trite in poetry but look brightly original in prose. *Barabbas*. By Par Lagerkvist. Random House. 180 pages. \$3.00. American readers may find this novel by a Swedish author who came second to William Faulkner in the balloting for the Nobel Prize a trifle puzzling. It is the story of Barabbas, the thief who was freed so that Christ might take his place on the cross. It starts at the moment of the Crucifixion and follows Barabbas until his own death by crucifixion some time later and tries to show the tremendous impact upon him of Golgotha. It is a deeply mystical, powerful work written with a deceptive simplicity that calls upon the

reader's own knowledge of biblical lore for its embroidery. *Union Bay, The Life of a City Marsh*. By H. W. Higman and E. J. Larrison. U. of Washington Press. 315 pages. \$4.00. The habits of other species than our own have been making fascinating reading ever since Fabre gave us the lowdown on the bee and the wasp. This book does not have Fabre's wealth of detail and is somewhat cluttered by tiresome statements about "Life." But it is well-researched and clearly presented and the way in which wild life adapts itself to big city surroundings holds more interest than can be found in many current novels about people who can't adapt to the city. *Edinburgh: The Golden Age*. By Michael Joyce. Longman Green & Co. 198 pages. An unpretentious, highly literate account of a remarkable period and a fascinating group of writers and thinkers. Mr. Joyce keeps himself in the background, writes informatively and quotes at length from the conversation and writing of Hume, Adam Smith, Robert Burns, and other Scottish notables.

The Secret of South Pacific

ROMANCE FOR THE MIDDLE-AGED

Ward Morehouse

IN THE New York theatrical season of 1943-44 a melodrama of men at war called *South Pacific* opened on Broadway and played for a very short run. In early April of 1949 Rodgers & Hammerstein, the foremost showmen of the American theater, presented their magnificent musical play, *South Pacific*, in New York without being at all disturbed by the fact that a non-musical piece of the same title had had a metropolitan engagement a few seasons earlier.

Such is the impermanence of a title when it is attached to non-success in the theater. There is nothing, showmen have long contended, that is so forgettable as the name of a play that has been a Broadway flop.

The Rodgers & Hammerstein *South Pacific* has become, with the passing of two and a half years, a

project of global renown. It has caught and stirred the imagination of millions. It is being played, as of the season of 1951-52, in New York, in Chicago and in London and is certain to hold its place in the world-theater for another decade. The Rodgers & Hammerstein *Oklahoma*, which put its stress on hope and happiness and definitely carries a message of reassurance, has established itself as the most successful song and dance play brought forth in the history of our theater. But the returns on *South Pacific* are incomplete. Many precincts, such as great areas of the U. S., the Australian continent, continental Europe and the Union of South Africa, are still to be heard from.

Just what has this *South Pacific* got? Just what does it offer that has so fascinated tens of thousands of playgoers and that has brought it

into the consciousness of millions who have never seen it? Perhaps many of those who know the Rodgers music and are familiar with the story of Nellie Forbush and the French planter nearly twice her age, but who have been denied the privilege of seeing *South Pacific* upon the stage, have asked themselves the reasons for the enormous impact of this play. Perhaps they've found answers that satisfy them. I'm still looking for those answers. So are Rodgers and Hammerstein.

But let's make the effort, in this space, to consider the factual evidence, along with the intangibles and the imponderables, as to why *South Pacific* has been the sensation of the amusement world for two and a half years.

It has these attributes: It has made a romantic figure of a man in his late fifties and has, undoubtedly, brought home to many a man of such age, and even older, that late-in-life romance is by no means unachievable. It has delivered, and in romantic terms, a lesson and a message in racial tolerance. And besides making its points on the questions of age and of race, *South Pacific* offers an enchanting score, entertainment values in the rowdiness of the Seabees and Marines against an exotic background, and it combines the technical skills of the theater — those of the composer, the lyricist, the librettist, the scenic designer, the costumer, the stage director, the

choreographer — in a collaborative effort that has produced extraordinary results.

FIRST, consider the services rendered by *South Pacific* in the popularization of the principle that a man in the late fifties can more than hold his own in the field of romantic conquest — who, in the words of the graying and fiercely articulate Naval Captain in the play, is by no means “through!”

That *South Pacific* has a great appeal for playgoers in the 40-to-70 age brackets is demonstrated by the fact that there has been an undiminished demand for the \$6 tickets. Obviously, the majority of such purchasers are not little boys and girls, but people with money to afford such prices, and who are approaching middle-age, have reached it or are beyond it. I was in New York's Majestic theater on the evening that Mary Martin, who had given her final New York performance some weeks before, returned just to see the show. She created a stampede. There was a wild rush upon her as she entered the foyer; playgoers swarmed about her after she had gone to her seat and fairly mobbed her during the intermission. And just who were these people who were clawing and pushing and jostling and thrusting out their playbills as they begged for autographs? They were *not* the autograph hoodlums of the sidewalks; they were *not*

teen-agers. They were people in their thirties, forties, fifties, and sixties who had been calm and sedate enough at 8:15 P.M. But when Miss Martin arrived at 8:20 they reacted as if someone had shouted "Fire!" There was pandemonium. I know; I saw it happen.

Such playgoers have been leaving performances of *South Pacific* for two and a half years with the feeling that if such enchanted evenings can come to Nellie Forbush and Emile De Becque, they can come to anybody. Nellie and her Frenchman are people of innate shyness; they are tremulous and uncertain when they find themselves mutually attracted; they are actually afraid of each other. But once their romance takes hold, they are determined not to let go. *South Pacific* is revolutionary in its presentation of a 57-year-old lover and tradition-smashing in the handling of its materials. Consider the lament of the lyrical but agonized Julie of *Show Boat*, who lists the short comings of her lover as she admits that she just "Can't help lovin' dat man," and contrast it with the rhapsodic outbursts of Nellie Forbush, who wants Little Rock and all the world to know that she is in love with a wonderful guy!

People of the middle years with emotional problems of their own have responded to the honesty and the maturity of the love story of *South Pacific* and have found gratification in the fact that a man

nearing sixty is accepted as the romantic ideal of an attractive girl in her twenties. And notwithstanding such handicaps as these: the language he knows best is foreign to her; he fled to the refuge of the far Pacific after having killed a man in his native land; and he is the father of two children by a Polynesian.

Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II, men of the theater who are interested in doing musical plays that have something to say, sensed the possibilities of such a love story long before they began battling with the untold intricacies of *South Pacific*. The story called "Fo' Dolla'," from James Michener's *Tales of the South Pacific*, was the piece of short fiction that first attracted Joshua Logan and Leland Hayward, and they asked Rodgers to read it. He did so and said: "Hell, let's buy the dramatic rights to the whole book."

He and Hammerstein later got to talking of the story entitled "Our Heroine," that of Nellie and the lonely planter. It appealed to them as material for a sound and moving and dramatic theme, the major theme, and it was their decision that the tragic love story between the American Naval Lieutenant and the beautiful young daughter of Bloody Mary, a Tonkinese, should be secondary. They went ahead with the shaping of *South Pacific* along these lines.

Emile De Becque, in the two and

a half years of the reign of *South Pacific*, has acquired Great Lover status. His has been the power to stir and to ignite, to advance the doctrine that the romantic impulse is recoverable. He has brought many a man of the middle years to the conviction that romance might somehow turn up some evening, across a crowded room. And if the American male of the late fifties gets a sense of vicarious triumph from Emile De Becque's successful wooing of the youthful Miss Forbush, it is also quite likely that his wife will find herself believing that he is well worth having around for another decade or so.

FOR ALL of its appeal to playgoers in the 40-to-70 years span, *South Pacific* delights teen-agers as well as octogenarians. And, I suspect, for the reasons that its comic interludes are first-rate, its dramatic moments have tension, and its songs represent solid musicianship plus a subtle facility for the popular ear. Such songs as the dreamy and exalted "Some Enchanted Evening," "A Wonderful Guy," "There Is Nothing like a Dame," and "Bali Ha'i" reveal a composer and a lyricist working in blissful accord. There is a tremendously effective plea for racial tolerance in the Lieutenant's chanting of "You Have To Be Taught." And there is also the fact that the beautifully integrated *South Pacific*, which has been put

together carefully, thoughtfully, and lovingly, actually offers a little of everything: humor, poignance, tenderness, gallantry, and many touching and sombre moments.

The American musical theater is the most highly collaborative form of art. A strange and mysterious fusion of all elements was apparent in the success of *Oklahoma*; a combination of techniques in all departments has brought near-perfection in the case of *South Pacific*. And, more recently, in the case of the Rodgers & Hammerstein *The King and I*, which has startled even its creators by the power of its box office appeal.

As for *South Pacific*, it's the best musical show I ever saw and I've been going to the theater with something approximating fanatical zeal since my teen-age years. I've seen *South Pacific* in its entirety four times; I've looked in upon scenes of it some two dozen times. Being within about seven years of Emile De Becque's age and of the approximate antiquity of the snarling Naval Captain, who is by no means ready for the shelf, I've never been inclined to believe that I'd gone beyond the border of romanticism. My feeling as to my own unextinguishable impetuosity was strengthened in the seeing, and in the hearing, of the ardent Frenchman's winning of Little Rock's Miss Forbush.

When you look for the reasons of

success and failure in the theater, there are always those intangibles, those elusive factors that make one play worth five million, net, and another, representing an equal outlay in cash and effort and supposedly in talent, not worth the printing of the first week's tickets. I've sought, with this article, to tell you why *South Pacific* is making for itself a place in the American cultural pattern, why I feel that it will be as imperishable as *The Merry Widow*. Besides possessing the qualities that I have set forth, I know that *South Pacific* also offers something that is incommunicable and indefinable.

People leave the theater feeling better than they did when they came in.

There is the story of a man from New York's Westchester County who had resisted for months the pleadings of his wife. Finally, he agreed to see the play if she could get the seats. She got them. He made little comment after the first act, but at 11:20 o'clock, as they were leaving the Majestic Theater, he took her arm and said quietly:

"Jerry, I'm in no mood for the New Haven Railroad tonight. We're going back to New Rochelle by taxi!"

Animals That Aren't

ALAN DEVOE



*Down
to
Earth*

THE ANIMALS OF this grass-green and sea-wet planet are an astonishing company. The throng of animals is teeming enormously, its species running into the multimillions; and it is so rich in the queer and unexpected, the odd, the arresting, the lovely, the thought-starting, the downright flabbergasting, that a man may very well spend his whole life staring at the animal creation with his mouth agape in an everlasting enchanted surprise. It is a very strange world, this. The homeliest chipmunk is a prodigy. A caterpillar is so spectacular a wonder that it nearly overwhelms.

Amazing as the animals of actuality are, however, our fertilely imaginative human mind has always had a taste for increasing the animal

populace with creatures of our own devising. It has not been enough that there should exist a hummingbird, which can beat its wings fifty or seventy-five times a second and can fly backward, or that there should exist those water-bugs, the *Notonectidae*, which flop over on their backs in the water and with a wild implausibility habitually swim upside-down. We have had to add the salamander which can live cheerfully in fire, the unicorn that bears a great single tusk-antler in the mid-

dle of its forehead, and the griffin that is a sort of lion with eagle-wings. It is odd enough, in all truth, that lizards should exist at all. We have felt impelled to swell their company with a dragon-serpent of our own, the basilisk, the breath of which — nay even the hostile glance — can be immediately fatal.

MYTHICAL ANIMALS, of course, come into being in all sorts of ways. Some of them date back to very early animism. They are the filled-out “spirit” of this rocky gorge, that sweep of sky, that shadow-haunted glen. Some are religious symbols come alive. Some are pure story-telling . . . creatures thought up, on some ancient evening around the fire, by a yarn-spinner. Great hosts of them are just long-ago misunderstandings and faulty observations: a mammal’s tail-track misinterpreted as the track of a serpent accompanying the mammal, a sudden disappearance of paw-prints in the forest loam misinterpreted as evidence that the animal making them must abruptly have taken wing. Mythical animals have proliferated out of ignorance, out of fear, out of exuberant creative fantasy, out of all sorts of aspects of our singular human spirits. The extraordinary thing about them is the way they have survived.

In this brisk scientific day of ours, when any mechanic’s helper or stenographer can discuss guided missiles

or speculate upon the coming of the atomic cook-stove, the great company of mythical animals endures almost as hardy as ever. There can’t be very many people, now, who believe that “the night air” is poisonous, or that werewolves fear garlic, or that a man with scrofula is best treated by being touched by a king. But bring up, around the Atomic Age dinner-table, the matter of that curious serpent, the hoop-snake. There ceases all banter and frivolity. The hoop-snake? Why yes — it is the banker on our left speaking — my Uncle George once had a remarkable encounter with a hoop-snake out near Laramie. . . . Let no prudent naturalist, now, emit a murmur that there *are* no hoop-snakes. It is social ruin. The hoop-snake, which was taking its tail in its mouth and rolling along in lolloping circles back when Davy Crockett’s cousin was polishing off nine lined-up squirrels with one shot is still rolling with undiminished reality this evening.

The late Ted Robinson of the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* used often to write to this department of the MERCURY, transmitting his latest discoveries about the mythical animals treasured in lumber-camps and out on the range, and lamenting that most of these animals, alas, could not be chronicled in the magazine. Men’s fancies being what they are, out in the remote woods or the far prairie, the habits of such a superb

animal as the dingmaul, for instance, are mostly unprintable. (The dingmaul is a mysterious fur-bearing quadruped of the north woods which can so perfectly imitate the sound of cutting firewood for supper that lost timber-cruisers are often lured to the vicinity of its den. The dingmaul, having overpowered its victim, proceeds to outrages unmentionable.) These mythical animals, if more robust than some, are but members of an enormous company. Most of the mythical animals are decorous. All of them, apparently, are imperishable. The age of nuclear fission may be here. Perhaps the cure of cancer and the visiting of the moon are just around the corner. It makes no difference in the perseverance of the Hair-Snarling Bat, the Equilibrrious Cat, or the Toad that lives in the Cornerstone.

The hair-snarling bat, of course, is a common bat — it is any bat that goes swooping and skittering through the gloaming — and it terrorizes everyone's aunt. She must clap her hands over her head and hurry for shelter; for bats — does not everyone know? — are notorious for snarling themselves in a woman's hair so inextricably that the hair must be cut off. A terrible creature, the hair-snarling bat. If no naturalist has ever found one, if science denies the creature, well, what-of-that?

There is the crab-catching fox, for instance. It dangles its tail in tide-pools, and presently, flip!, it has

pulled up a succulent seafood supper. There will be no laughing, please. I distinctly remember my grandfather telling me. He observed this fox-performance often, just as he observed how a tree can be stung to death by a snake and just as he marked the eerie infallibility with which a falling cat, from whatever a height, always lands on its feet.

However many columns the newspapers give to the latest scientific congress or the newest jet-propelled pressure-cooker, they must save some space for the current toad-in-cornerstone. The toad is found, of course, when the Revolutionary Courthouse is torn down. It is immured in the cornerstone. "An authority who visited the scene was able to determine" that the toad had unmistakably been walled-up inside the cornerstone since 1776. When toads are sealed up by naturalists under test-conditions, they have an unexciting way of dying within a few months or even weeks. In these old cornerstones, however, well . . . nature is very remarkable. After all, did not Cousin Charlie in Bangor personally see a milk-snake milking his cows and is it not a well-known fact that if you leave a horse-hair in water it will turn into a serpent?

IF THE ASSAULTS of the dingmaul are unfortunately of an indescribable ferocity, there are many other dangers from animals which may freely be discussed around the

modern-minded or atomic-age dinner-table. There is the tale of the bear-hug, that hideous embrace by which bears, as we all know, slowly squeeze the life out of their victims. Or we need not go so far afield. In the nearest cow-pasture is to be found the glittering "devil's darning-needle," and one must have heard — surely? — how Gloria's brother-in-law was attacked, and his lips stitched, by one of those? The insects can be as dangerous, almost, as hornets, which are of course famous for their sinister ability, if you fire a shot into one of their big gray paper nests, to "trace the bullet" and swarm upon you almost before your finger has left the trigger. It is a world of strange and dangerous animals, everywhere. At any moment a whipsnake (which normally occupies itself in flogging rattlesnakes) may hurl itself around our running legs and throw us to the ground. Or in an injudicious moment we may wear a red garment and let it be seen by a bull. It maddens him, of course. (*Color-blind*, do you say? We shall not again ask this naturalist to dinner).

In horde upon horde the mythical animals survive and thrive . . . the chimney swifts that bring bedbugs into our houses, the death-watch beetles that announce by their ominous rappings that Grandpa is about to pass on, the white-headed eagles that snatch up our youngsters by

their romper-bands and carry them off to their eyries, the rats that flee as the ship leaves on what is to prove its doomed voyage, the caterpillars that premonstrate by their markings how severe the coming winter is going to be, the elephants that stampede in terror because they have seen a mouse, the snakes that mesmerize their prey, the camel that can go six months without a drink. You were speaking of animals, sir? It is a well-known fact . . . Hunters say . . . The Indians tell . . . Let me put down my knife and fork for a moment and relate to you what my great-grandfather once saw on a sidewater of the Upper Mirimichi.

WITH THE MIDWINTER of the year coming on now, there may not be a great many animals for us to see in the whitened world of the actual outdoors. We need not repine. The human spirit is a great and glorious thing, not without resources, and not to be fettered by fact or put down by dismal denyings. Not many actual animals to find? It need not matter. We can summon hosts of others, to companion and beguile us, from that unfailing trove of fancy upon which it is the undying privilege of storytellers to draw, when the north wind howls across the land and there burns upon our sacred hearth such a fire as once sent its magical light a-flickering on the walls of the winter cave.

Draughts of Old Bourbon



ON EUNUCHS, PAST AND PRESENT

James Monroe Madison

ORDINARILY I don't spend much time meditating on eunuchs, but a letter from Hoyt McAfee, of Los Angeles, has demanded some effort to understand their point of view.

Mr. McAfee, it seems, has recently been wandering through Morocco where he became friendly enough with several Moorish gentlemen to be invited to visit their harems. In the harems, however, Mr. McAfee was received only by the eunuchs — the wives and concubines being required to hide behind arrases — so he whiled away a few relaxed hours sprawled on carpets, drinking coffee, nibbling Arab sweetmeats, and chewing over the general world situation with eunuchs.

For perspective on Mr. McAfee's reports I turned back to the *Persian Letters* of the Baron de Montesquieu, who, in 1721, discoursed incisively on the thought processes of eunuchs. Wherefore, guided by both McAfee and Montesquieu, I have reflected on: 1) why men become eunuchs, and 2) the effect of eunuchry on what was the masculine mind.

The demand for eunuchs seems to be increasing today, yet there is no shortage of them. To get one, you proceed in a customary manner. If you are assembling a harem, you obviously must have managers and guards for it. You can't hire women for these jobs — a woman is seldom successful at guarding other women's virtue — and if you are considering

men for the jobs, why, naturally, you have the right to request whatever surrenders from them seem necessary as guarantees that they will confine their energies to managing and guarding.

When you need a eunuch then, today as always, you first must *persuade* a man to become a eunuch. Neither Montesquieu nor McAfee has found any evidence that force has ever been used by a harem owner, though there have been cases where eunuchs themselves have tried to force other men to become as they were. One such case was reported by Montesquieu in this letter from the Chief Black Eunuch to his master:

Ishmael, one of your black eunuchs, O Magnificent Master, has just died; and I tried to avoid any delay in filling his place. As eunuchs are very scarce at present, I thought of making use of a black slave, one Pharan, whom you have in the country; but I have not yet succeeded in persuading Pharan to undergo the sacrifice necessary for his consecration to that office. Knowing that this change would in the end work for his advantage, I wished the other day to employ towards him a little violence; and, in company with the superintendent of your gardens, I commanded that, in spite of himself, he should be put into a fit state to render you those services which most appeal to your heart, and to live with me in those sacred quarters, which, at present, he durst not even look at; but Pharan fell a-roaring,

as if we had wanted to flay him, and made such a to-do that he escaped from our hands, and so avoided the fatal knife. I have only now learned that he intends to write you begging for mercy, and that he will urge in his defense that this design has been conceived by me, only in satisfaction of a relentless desire to be avenged for some cutting sarcasms which he says he vented against me. However, I swear to you by the hundred thousand prophets, that in this matter I have acted entirely for the benefit of your service, the only thing which is dear to me, beyond which I have not a single thought. I prostrate myself at your feet.

From this it can readily be deduced that directing sarcasm toward eunuchs has always been a dangerous practice. Moreover, eunuchs, trying to force eunuchdom on other men, have always been able to agree that "the change would in the end work for the victim's advantage."

Young Pharan, trying to resist the Chief Black Eunuch, dispatched this plea to his master:

If you were here, Magnificent Lord, I would appear to you clad from head to foot in white paper; and even that would not be enough to contain a description of all the insults which your first black eunuch, the most malignant of men, has heaped upon me since your departure.

Under pretext of some sarcasms which he pretends I aimed at his unfortunate lot, he makes me the victim of an insatiable vengeance.

He has stirred up against me the cruel superintendent of your gardens, who, ever since you have left, has laid upon me impossible tasks, in attempting which I have a thousand times taken leave of life, although I never for an instant lost my ardour in your service.

I confess, most generous lord, that I did not believe myself destined to still greater miseries; but this felonious eunuch has yet to fill up the measure of his wickedness. Some days ago, on his unsupported authority, he destined me to the guardianship of your sacred wives; that is to say, to a punishment which to me would be a thousand times more cruel than death. Were this fate to befall me, were I to lose my place among men and be deprived of that which makes me human, I should die of grief.

I kiss your feet, sublime lord, in the deepest humility. Grant that I may feel the effects of your revered virtue. Let it not be said that, at your command, there is upon the earth one more unhappy being.

The Master's reply to Pharan is significant:

Rejoice in your heart and acknowledge these sacred characters. Let the chief eunuch and the superintendent of my gardens kiss this letter. I prohibit them from attempting anything against you: tell them to purchase the eunuch they require, and on my return, I'll employ persuasion to relieve the shortage of eunuchs.

McAfee reports that today eunuchs are more plentiful than ever;

there is no shortage at all, because there are numbers of men who are willing to give up their masculinity in order to gain the twin rewards of eunuchry: security and the privilege of exercising command over women.

Montesquieu delineated the rewards of eunuchry, as well as its torments, in a letter from the Chief Eunuch to Ibbi, a servant who was traveling in Europe with his master:

Ibbi, you follow our master on his travels; you see new sights all day long; everything you behold entertains you, and you are unconscious of the flight of time.

It is not so with me. Shut up in a hideous prison, I am always surrounded by the same objects. Weighed down by fifty years of care and annoyance, I lament my wretched case.

When my first master formed the design of entrusting his wives to my care, and induced me by promises to separate myself forever from my manhood, tired of the toilsome service in which I was engaged, I calculated that the sacrifice of my passions would be more than repaid by ease and wealth. How unfortunate was I! Preoccupied with the thought of ills I would escape, I had no idea of the others to which I fled. But I have grown old and become, somewhat, at peace with myself.

Women I regard with indifference. I pay them back for all the contempt and all the torments which I suffered through them, I never forget that I was born to command them, and in the exercise of my au-

thority I feel as if I had recovered my lost manhood. Since I can regard them without passion, I hate women, and I detect and discuss all their weaknesses. Although I guard them for another, I experience a secret joy in making myself obeyed. When I take all their pleasures from them, I feel as if it were at my behest alone; and that always gives me satisfaction. The harem is my empire; and my ambition, the only passion left me, finds no small gratification. I mark with pleasure that all depends on me, and that my presence is required at all times. I willingly incur the hatred of these women, because that establishes me more firmly in my post. And they do not hate me for nothing, I can tell you: I interfere with their most innocent pleasures; I am always in the way, an insurmountable obstacle; before they know where they are they find their schemes frustrated; I am armed with refusals, I bristle with scruples; not a word is heard from me but duty, virtue, chastity, modesty. I make them desperate by dinning into them the weakness of their sex and the authority of our master. Then I lament the necessity which requires me to be so severe, and lead them to believe that my only motives are their truest interests and my profound attachment to them.

Do not suppose that in my turn I have not to suffer endless unpleasantness. Every day these women seek occasions to repay me with interest. Between us there goes on a constant interchange of ascendancy and obedience. They are always putting upon me the meanest services;

they affect a sublime contempt; and, regardless of my age, they force me to rise ten times during the night for the merest trifle. I am worn off my feet with endless commissions, employments, and caprices; one would think that they take turn about in inventing occupations for me. They often amuse themselves by making me doubly vigilant; they give me imaginary confidences. Sometimes I am told that a young man has been seen prowling around the walls, or a startling noise has been heard, or some one is about to receive a letter. All this bothers me and amuses them; they are delighted when they see me tormenting myself. They know well how to pretend to be ill, to swoon away, to be frightened out of their wits: they are never at a loss for some pretext to work their will on me. When they are in this mood, implicit obedience, unquestioning compliance are my only resources. I would sooner die, my dear Ibbi, than submit to their humiliations.

But this is not all. I am never for an instant sure of my master's favor; for each of his wives is an enemy who never ceases to hope for my ruin. They take advantage of certain snatches of time when I cannot be heard, when he can refuse them nothing, and when I am always in the wrong. I conduct to my master's bed women whose spite is roused against me: do you imagine that they will move a finger in my behalf, or say a single word in my favor? I have everything to fear from their tears, their sighs, their embraces; it is their time of triumph; their charms are arrayed against me; their present

services obliterate in a moment all those rendered by me in the past; and, alas, nothing can plead for me with a master who is delirious.

Many a time I lie down high in my master's favor, and awake to find myself disgraced. The day on which he whipped me so ignominiously around the harem, what had I done? I leave a woman in my master's arms: when she sees him impassioned she bursts into a torrent of tears, and pours out complaints so skillfully that they become more anguished in proportion as the love she causes grows vehement. What could I do to defend myself at a crisis of that kind? When I least expected it, ruin overtook me; I was the victim of an amorous intrigue, of a treaty sealed with sighs. Behold, dear Ibbi, the wretched plight in which I have always lived.

The present-day eunuchs interviewed by McAfee seem to be somewhat less sensitive and complex than Montesquieu's Black Eunuch. All of his informants appeared happy in their secure positions of command.

"I particularly recall," he writes, "one pleasant afternoon spent with three eunuchs in a harem near Fez. The eunuchs were as gossipy as fishwives. They revealed that my host had nine wives and six concubines, and they gave me spicy details about each one of them.

"The three eunuchs wore feminine, silken garments in the most casual manner. There was no masculine quality in their voices; in fact, their whimpering in parrot-like

tones gave me a creepy feeling. I observed that their hips had spread out and had become flabby. Their facial features were soft, smooth, and lacking any trace of whiskers.

" 'Do you ever have to shave?' I asked. They all shook their heads.

"After a cup of coffee, I asked the most responsive eunuch: 'Just what are your duties here in the harem?'

"He exchanged glances with the other two eunuchs, then replied: 'We guard and we command. The women are our responsibility, and we keep them virtuous and beautiful for our master.'

"The eunuchs were in such a cheerful mood that I asked them if it were true that they had willingly become eunuchs. They nodded. They said that as young men they had lived normal lives; they had courted unveiled girls in the cafés; they had engaged in sex relations. But they had known hunger and unemployment; life had seemed so difficult and insecure that they had decided to accept the security and companionship of a harem.

"When I asked them if they didn't feel cheated, left out, they shook their heads. They said that they felt completely relaxed and natural around women — and they assured me that women often prefer the company of eunuchs to men.

"I inquired if they ever had any trouble with the women, and they said yes, sometimes, but on the other hand they insisted that most

of the women were friendly. It is the duty of the eunuchs to help the wives with their baths and to massage them with ointments and perfumes. The eunuchs said that often when a husband grows tired of a certain wife and divorces her from the harem, she'll request that her favorite eunuch be permitted to go with her."

THE PRACTICE of emasculating men, curiously enough, began with a woman: the Assyrian Queen Semiramis, who was the "Builder of Babylon" and one of the most notorious nymphomaniacs in history. A furiously jealous woman, she kept a royal surgeon standing by at all times to render every discarded lover incapable of bringing ecstasy

to any other woman.

The Persians first began persuading men to surrender their masculinity in exchange for the security and the satisfactions of authority in the harem. The Greeks coined the word "eunuch," and the Romans used the word "spado."

In modern times the most famous threat of emasculation, of course, was the one expressed in writing by a President of the United States to a music critic who had displeased him.

With events proceeding as they are, it appears unlikely that there will be any shortage of eunuchs in the foreseeable future. For never before have men seemed so eager to make concessions in order to obtain security and authority.

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